I.K. Sherwin del et Sculp.

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BRITISH
MUSEUM

THE

# POETICAL WORKS

OF

# RICHARD SAVAGE,

IN TWO VOLUMES.

WITH THE LIFE OF THE AUTHOR.

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.....No Mother's care
Shielded my infant innocence with prayer;
No Father's guardian hand my youth maintain'd,
Call'd forth my virtues, or from vice restrain'd. BASTARD.
Why were my studious hours oppos'd by need?
In me did poverty from guilt proceed?----
Did I sooth vice, or venal strokes betray
In the low-purpos'd loud polemic fray?
Did e'er my verse immodest warmth contain?
Or, once licentious, heav'nly truths profane?
Never--------- WANDERER.

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BRITISH MUSEUM

# RICHARD SAVAGE.

It has been obſerved in all ages, that the advantages of nature or of fortune have contributed very little to the promotion of happineſs; and that thoſe whom the ſplendour of their rank, or the extent of their capacity, have placed upon the ſummits of human life have not often given any juſt occaſion to envy in thoſe who look up to them from a lower ſtation. Whether it be that apparent ſuperiority incites great deſigns, and great deſigns are naturally liable to fatal miſcarriages, or that the general lot of mankind is miſery, and the misfortunes of thoſe whoſe eminence drew upon them an univerſal attention have been more carefully recorded, becauſe they were more generally obſerved, and have in reality been only more conſpicuous than thoſe of others, not more frequent or more ſevere.

That affluence and power, advantages extrinſic and adventitious, and therefore eaſily ſeparable from thoſe by whom they are poſſeſſed, ſhould very often flatter the mind with expectations of felicity which they cannot give, raiſes no aſtoniſhment; but it ſeems rational to hope that intellectual greatneſs ſhould produce better effects; that minds qualified for great attainments ſhould firſt endeavour their own benefit; and that they who are moſt able to teach others the

way to happineſs ſhould with moſt certainty follow it themſelves.

But this expectation, however plauſible, has been very frequently diſappointed. The heroes of literary as well as civil hiſtory have been very often no leſs remarkable for what they have ſuffered than for what they have achieved; and volumes have been written only to enumerate the miſeries of the learned, and relate their unhappy lives and untimely deaths.

To theſe mournful narratives I am about to add The Life of Richard Savage, a man whoſe Writings entitle him to an eminent rank in the claſſes of learning, and whoſe misfortunes claim a degree of compaſſion not always due to the unhappy, as they were often the conſequences of the crimes of others rather than his own.

In the year 1697 Anne Counteſs of Macclesfield, having lived for ſome time upon very uneaſy terms with her huſband, thought a public confeſſion of adultery the moſt obvious and expeditious method of obtaining her liberty, and therefore declared that the child with which ſhe was then great was begotten by the Earl Rivers. This, as may be eaſily imagined, made her huſband no leſs deſirous of a ſeparation than herſelf, and he proſecuted his deſign in the moſt effectual manner; for he applied not to the eccleſiaſtical courts for a divorce, but to the parliament for an act, by which his marriage might be diſſolved, the nup-

tial contract totally annulled, and the children of his wife illegitimated. This act, after the uſual deliberation, he obtained, though without the approbation of ſome, who conſidered marriage as an affair only cognizable by eccleſiaſtical judges; and on March 3d was ſeparated from his wife, whoſe fortune, which was very great, was repaid her; and who having, as well as her huſband, the liberty of making another choice, was in a ſhort time married to Colonel Bret.

While the Earl of Macclesfield was proſecuting this affair, his wife was, on the 10th of January 1697-8, delivered of a ſon, and the Earl Rivers, by appearing to conſider him as his own, left none any reaſon to doubt of the ſincerity of her declaration; for he was his godfather, and gave him his own name, which was by his direction inſerted in the regiſter of St. Andrew's pariſh in Holborn, but unfortunately left him to the care of his mother, whom, as ſhe was now ſet free from her huſband, he probably imagined likely to treat with great tenderneſs the child that had contributed to ſo pleaſing an event. It is not indeed eaſy to diſcover what motives could be found to overbalance that natural affection of a parent, or what intereſt could be promoted by neglect or cruelty. The dread of ſhame or of poverty, by which ſome wretches have been incited to abandon or to murder their children, cannot be ſuppoſed to have affected a woman who had proclaimed her crime, and ſolicited reproach,

and on whom the clemency of the legiſlature had undeſervedly beſtowed a fortune, which would have been very little diminiſhed by the expenſes which the care of her child could have brought upon her. It was therefore not likely that ſhe would be wicked without temptation; that ſhe would look upon her ſon from his birth with a kind of reſentment and abhorrence, and inſtead of ſupporting, aſſiſting, and defending, him, delight to ſee him ſtruggling with miſery; or that ſhe would take every opportunity of aggravating his misfortunes, and obſtructing his reſources, and with an implacable and reſtleſs cruelty continue her perſecution from the firſt hour of his life to the laſt.

But whatever were her motives, no ſooner was her ſon born than ſhe diſcovered a reſolution of diſowning him; and in a very ſhort time removed him from her ſight, by committing him to the care of a poor woman, whom ſhe directed to educate him as her own, and enjoined never to inform him of his true parents.

Such was the beginning of the life of Richard Savage: born with a legal claim to honour and to affluence, he was in two months illegitimated by the parliament, and diſowned by his mother, doomed to poverty and obſcurity, and lanched upon the ocean of life only that he might be ſwallowed by its quick-ſands, or daſhed upon its rocks.

His mother could not indeed infect others with the ſame cruelty. As it was impoſſible to avoid the inquiries which the curioſity or tenderneſs of her relations made after her child, ſhe was obliged to give ſome account of the meaſures that ſhe had taken; and her mother, the Lady Maſon, whether in approbation of her deſign, or to prevent more criminal contrivances, engaged to tranſact with the nurſe, to pay her for her care, and to ſuperintend the education of the child.

In this charitable office ſhe was aſſiſted by his godmother Mrs. Lloyd, who, while ſhe lived, always looked upon him with that tenderneſs which the barbarity of his mother made peculiarly neceſſary; but her death, which happened in his tenth year, was another of the misfortunes of his childhood; for though ſhe kindly endeavoured to alleviate his loſs by a legacy of three hundred pounds, yet as he had none to proſecute his claim, to ſhelter him from oppreſſion, or call in law to the aſſiſtance of juſtice, her will was eluded by the executors, and no part of the money was ever paid.

He was, however, not yet wholly abandoned: the Lady Maſon ſtill continued her care, and directed him to be placed at a ſmall grammar-ſchool near St. Alban's, where he was called by the name of his nurſe, without the leaſt intimation that he had a claim to any other.

Here he was initiated in literature, and paſſed

through ſeveral of the claſſes, with what rapidity or what applauſe cannot now be known. As he always ſpoke with reſpect of his maſter, it is probable that the mean rank in which he then appeared did not hinder his genius from being diſtinguiſhed, or his induſtry from being rewarded: and if in ſo low a ſtate he obtained diſtinction and rewards, it is not likely that they were gained but by genius and induſtry.

It is very reaſonable to conjecture that his application was equal to his abilities, becauſe his improvement was more than proportioned to the opportunities which he enjoyed; nor can it be doubted that if his earlieſt productions had been preſerved, like thoſe of happier ſtudents, we might in ſome have found vigorous ſallies of that ſprightly humour which diſtinguiſhes The Author to be Let, and in others ſtrong touches of that ardent imagination which painted the ſolemn ſcenes of The Wanderer.

While he was thus cultivating his genius, his father, the Earl Rivers, was ſeized with a diſtemper which in a ſhort time put an end to his life. He had frequently inquired after his ſon, and had always been amuſed with fallacious and evaſive anſwers; but being now in his own opinion on his deathbed, he thought it his duty to provide for him among his other natural children, and therefore demanded a poſitive account of him, with an importunity not to be diverted or denied. His mother, who could no longer refuſe

an anſwer, determined at leaſt to give ſuch as ſhould cut him off for ever from that happineſs which competence affords, and therefore declared that he was dead; which is perhaps the firſt inſtance of a lie invented by a mother to deprive her ſon of a proviſion which was deſigned him by another, and which ſhe could not expect herſelf, though he ſhould loſe it.

This was therefore an act of wickedneſs which could not be defeated, becauſe it could not be ſuſpected: the Earl did not imagine that there could exiſt in a human form a mother that would ruin her ſon without enriching herſelf, and therefore beſtowed upon ſome other perſon ſix thouſand pounds, which he had in his will bequeathed to Savage.

The ſame cruelty which incited his mother to intercept this proviſion which had been intended him prompted her in a ſhort time to another project, a project worthy of ſuch a diſpoſition! ſhe endeavoured to rid herſelf from the danger of being at any time made known to him, by ſending him ſecretly to the American plantations *.

By whoſe kindneſs this ſcheme was counteracted, or by what interpoſition ſhe was induced to lay aſide her deſign, I know not; it is not improbable that the Lady Maſon might perſuade or compel her to deſiſt, or perhaps ſhe could not eaſily find accomplices wicked enough to concur in ſo cruel an action; for it may be

* Savage's Preface to his Miſcellany, p. 29.

conceived that thoſe who had, by a long gradation of guilt, hardened their hearts againſt the ſenſe of common wickedneſs, would yet be ſhocked at the deſign of a mother to expoſe her ſon to ſlavery and want, to expoſe him without intereſt, and without provocation; and Savage might on this occaſion find protectors and advocates among thoſe who had long traded in crimes, and whom compaſſion had never touched before.

Being hindered, by whatever means, from baniſhing him into another country, ſhe formed, ſoon after, a ſcheme for burying him in poverty and obſcurity in his own; and that his ſtation of life, if not the place of his reſidence, might keep him for ever at a diſtance from her, ſhe ordered him to be placed with a ſhoemaker in Holborn, that after the uſual time of trial he might become his apprentice *.

It is generally reported that this project was for ſome time ſucceſsful, and that Savage was employed at the awl longer than he was willing to confeſs; nor was it perhaps any great advantage to him that an unexpected diſcovery determined him to quit his occupation.

About this time his nurſe, who had always treated him as her own ſon, died; and it was natural for him to take care of thoſe effects which, by her death, were, as he imagined, become his own; he therefore went to her houſe, opened her boxes, and examined her pa-

* Preface to Savage's Miſcellanies, p. 29.

pers, among which he found ſome letters written to her by the Lady Maſon, which informed him of his birth, and the reaſons for which it was concealed.

He was now no longer ſatisfied with the employment which had been allotted him, but thought he had a right to ſhare the affluence of his mother, and therefore, without ſcruple, applied to her as her ſon, and made uſe of every art to awaken her tenderneſs, and attract her regard; but neither his letters nor the interpoſition of thoſe friends which his merit or his diſtreſs procured him made any impreſſion upon her mind; ſhe ſtill reſolved to neglect, though ſhe could no longer diſown, him.

It was to no purpoſe that he frequently ſolicited her to admit him to ſee her; ſhe avoided him with the moſt vigilant precaution, and ordered him to be excluded from her houſe, by whomſoever he might be introduced, and what reaſon ſoever he might give for entering it.

Savage was at the ſame time ſo touched with the diſcovery of his real mother, that it was his frequent practice to walk in the dark evenings for ſeveral hours before her door, in hopes of ſeeing her as ſhe might come by accident to the window, or croſs her apartment with a candle in her hand.

But all his aſſiduity and tenderneſs were without effect, for he could neither ſoften her heart nor open her hand, and was reduced to the utmoſt miſeries of

want while he was endeavouring to awaken the affection of a mother: he was therefore obliged to ſeek ſome other means of ſupport, and, having no profeſſion, became by neceſſity an author.

At this time the attention of all the literary world was engroſſed by the Bangorian controverſy, which filled the preſs with pamphlets, and the coffeehouſes with diſputants. Of this ſubject, as moſt popular, he made choice for his firſt attempt, and without any other knowledge of the queſtion than he had caſually collected from converſation, publiſhed a poem againſt the Biſhop.

What was the ſucceſs or merit of this performance I know not; it was probably loſt among the innumerable pamphlets to which that diſpute gave occaſion. Mr. Savage was himſelf in a little time aſhamed of it, and endeavoured to ſuppreſs it, by deſtroying all the copies he could collect.

He then attempted a more gainful kind of writing *, and in his eighteenth year offered to the ſtage a comedy borrowed from a Spaniſh plot, which was refuſed by the players, and was therefore given by him to Mr. Bullock, who, having more intereſt, made ſome ſlight alterations, and brought it upon the ſtage under the title of Woman's a Riddle, but allowed the unhappy Author no part of the profit.

Not diſcouraged, however, at his repulſe, he wrote,

* Jacob's Lives of Dramatic Poets.

two years afterwards, Love in a Veil, another comedy, borrowed likewiſe from the Spaniſh, but with little better ſucceſs than before; for though it was received and acted, yet it appeared ſo late in the year, that the Author obtained no other advantage from it than the acquaintance of Sir Richard Steele and Mr. Wilks, by whom he was pitied, careſſed, and relieved.

Sir Richard Steele having declared in his favour with all the ardour of benevolence which conſtituted his character, promoted his intereſt with the utmoſt zeal, related his misfortunes, applauded his merit, took all opportunities of recommending him, and aſſerted that "the inhumanity of his mother had given "him a right to find every good man his father."

Nor was Mr. Savage admitted to his acquaintance only, but to his confidence, of which he ſometimes related an inſtance too extraordinary to be omitted, as it affords a very juſt idea of his patron's character.

He was once deſired by Sir Richard, with an air of the utmoſt importance, to come very early to his houſe the next morning. Mr. Savage came as he had promiſed, found the chariot at the door, and Sir Richard waiting for him, and ready to go out. What was intended, and whither they were to go, Savage could not conjecture, and was not willing to inquire, but immediately ſeated himſelf with Sir Richard: the coachman was ordered to drive, and they hurried with the utmoſt expedition to Hyde-Park Corner,

where they ſtopped at a petty tavern, and retired to a private room. Sir Richard then informed him that he intended to publiſh a pamphlet, and that he had deſired him to come thither that he might write for him. They ſoon ſat down to the work. Sir Richard dictated, and Savage wrote, till the dinner that had been ordered was put upon the table. Savage was ſurpriſed at the meanneſs of the entertainment, and after ſome heſitation ventured to aſk for wine, which Sir Richard, not without reluctance, ordered to be brought. They then finiſhed their dinner, and proceeded in their pamphlet, which they concluded in the afternoon.

Mr. Savage then imagined his taſk over, and expected that Sir Richard would call for the reckoning, and return home: but his expectations deceived him, for Sir Richard told him that he was without money, and that the pamphlet muſt be ſold before the dinner could be paid for; and Savage was therefore obliged to go and offer their new production to ſale for two guineas, which with ſome difficulty he obtained. Sir Richard then returned home, having retired that day only to avoid his creditors, and compoſed the pamphlet only to diſcharge his reckoning.

Mr. Savage related another fact equally uncommon, which, though it has no relation to his Life, ought to be preſerved. Sir Richard Steele having one day invited to his houſe a great number of per-

ſons of the firſt quality, they were ſurpriſed at the number of liveries which ſurrounded the table; and after dinner, when wine and mirth had ſet them free from the obſervation of rigid ceremony, one of them inquired of Sir Richard how ſuch an expenſive train of domeſtics could be conſiſtent with his fortune? Sir Richard very frankly confeſſed, that they were fellows of whom he would very willingly be rid: and being then aſked why he did not diſcharge them? declared that they were bailiffs who had introduced themſelves with an execution, and whom, ſince he could not ſend them away, he had thought it convenient to embelliſh with liveries, that they might do him credit while they ſtaid.

His friends were diverted with the expedient, and by paying the debt diſcharged their attendance, having obliged Sir Richard to promiſe that they ſhould never again find him graced with a retinue of the ſame kind.

Under ſuch a tutor Mr. Savage was not likely to learn prudence or frugality, and perhaps many of the misfortunes which the want of thoſe virtues brought upon him in the following parts of his life might be juſtly imputed to ſo unimproving an example.

Nor did the kindneſs of Sir Richard end in common favours. He propoſed to have eſtabliſhed him in ſome ſettled ſcheme of life, and to have contracted a kind of alliance with him, by marrying him to a

natural daughter, on whom he intended to beſtow a thouſand pounds: but though he was always laviſh of future bounties, he conducted his affairs in ſuch a manner, that he was very ſeldom able to keep his promiſes, or execute his own intentions; and as he was never able to raiſe the ſum which he had offered the marriage was delayed. In the mean time he was officiouſly informed that Mr. Savage had ridiculed him; by which he was ſo much exaſperated, that he withdrew the allowance which he had paid him, and never afterwards admitted him to his houſe

It is not indeed unlikely that Savage might by his imprudence expoſe himſelf to the malice of a tale-bearer; for his patron had many follies, which as his diſcernment eaſily diſcovered, his imagination might ſometimes incite him to mention too ludicrouſly. A little knowledge of the world is ſufficient to diſcover that ſuch weakneſs is very common, and that there are few who do not ſometimes, in the wantonneſs of thoughtleſs mirth, or the heat of tranſient reſentment, ſpeak of their friends and benefactors with levity and contempt, though in their cooler moments they want neither ſenſe of their kindneſs nor reverence for their virtue. The fault, therefore, of Mr. Savage was rather negligence than ingratitude: but Sir Richard muſt likewiſe be acquitted of ſeverity; for who is there that can patiently bear contempt from one whom he has relieved and ſupported, whoſe eſtabliſh-

ment he has laboured, and whoſe intereſt he has promoted?

He was now again abandoned to Fortune, without any other friend than Mr. Wilks, a man who, whatever were his abilities or ſkill as an actor, deſerves at leaſt to be remembered for his virtues *, which are not often to be found in the world, and perhaps leſs often in his profeſſion than in others. To be humane, generous, and candid, is a very high degree of merit in any caſe; but thoſe qualities deſerve ſtill greater praiſe when they are found in that condition

* As it is a loſs to mankind when any good action is forgotten, I ſhall inſert another inſtance of Mr. Wilks's generoſity very little known. Mr. Smith, a gentleman educated at Dublin, being hindered by an impediment in his pronunciation from engaging in orders, for which his friends deſigned him, left his own country, and came to London in queſt of employment, but found his ſolicitations fruitleſs, and his neceſſities every day more preſſing. In this diſtreſs he wrote a tragedy, and offered it to the players, by whom it was rejected. Thus were his laſt hopes defeated, and he had no other proſpect than of the moſt deplorable poverty: but Mr. Wilks thought his performance, though not perfect, at leaſt worthy of ſome reward, and therefore offered him a benefit. This favour he improved with ſo much diligence, that the houſe afforded him a conſiderable ſum, with which he went to Leyden, applied himſelf to the ſtudy of phyſic, and proſecuted his deſign with ſo much diligence and ſucceſs, that when Dr. Boerhaave was deſired by the Czarina to recommend proper perſons to introduce into Ruſſia the practice and ſtudy of phyſic, Dr. Smith was one of thoſe whom he ſelected. He had a conſiderable penſion ſettled on him at his arrival, and was one of the chief phyſicians at the Ruſſian court.

which makes almoſt every other man, for whatever reaſon, contemptuous, inſolent, petulant, ſelfiſh, and brutal.

As Mr. Wilks was one of thoſe to whom Calamity ſeldom complained without relief, he naturally took an unfortunate wit into his protection, and not only aſſiſted him in any caſual diſtreſſes, but continued an equal and ſteady kindneſs to the time of his death.

By his interpoſition Mr. Savage once obtained from his mother fifty pounds *, and a promiſe of one hundred and fifty more; but it was the fate of this unhappy man that few promiſes of any advantage to him were performed. His mother was infected, among others, with the general madneſs of the South-ſea traffic, and having been diſappointed in her expectations, refuſed to pay what perhaps nothing but the proſpect of ſudden affluence prompted her to promiſe.

Being thus obliged to depend upon the friendſhip of Mr. Wilks, he was, conſequently, an aſſiduous frequenter of the theatres, and in a ſhort time the amuſements of the ſtage took ſuch poſſeſſion of his mind that he never was abſent from a play in ſeveral years.

This conſtant attendance naturally procured him the acquaintance of the players, and, among others, of Mrs. Oldfield, who was ſo much pleaſed with his converſation, and touched with his misfortunes, that

* This is aſſerted upon the credit of the author of his life, which was publiſhed 1727.

ſhe allowed him a ſettled penſion of fifty pounds a-year, which was, during her life, regularly paid.

That this act of generoſity may receive its due praiſe, and that the good actions of Mrs. Oldfield may not be ſullied by her general character, it is proper to mention what Mr. Savage often declared in the ſtrongeſt terms, that he never ſaw her alone, or in any other place than behind the ſcenes.

At her death he endeavoured to ſhew his gratitude in the moſt decent manner, by wearing mourning as for a mother, but did not celebrate her in elegies, becauſe he knew that too great profuſion of praiſe would only have revived thoſe faults which his natural equity did not allow him to think leſs becauſe they were committed by one who favoured him, but of which, though his virtue would not endeavour to palliate them, his gratitude would not ſuffer him to prolong the memory, or diffuſe the cenſure.

In his Wanderer he has indeed taken an opportunity of mentioning her, but celebrates her not for her virtue but her beauty, an excellence which none ever denied her. This is the only encomium with which he has rewarded her liberality, and perhaps he has even in this been too laviſh of his praiſe. He ſeems to have thought that never to mention his benefactreſs would have an appearance of ingratitude, though to have dedicated any particular performance to her memory would have only betrayed an officious par-

tiality that, without exalting her character, would have depreſſed his own.

He had ſometimes, by the kindneſs of Mr. Wilks, the advantage of a benefit, on which occaſions he often received uncommon marks of regard and compaſſion; and was once told by the Duke of Dorſet, that it was juſt to conſider him as an injured nobleman, and that in his opinion the nobility ought to think themſelves obliged, without ſolicitation, to take every opportunity of ſupporting him by their countenance and patronage. But he had generally the mortification to hear that the whole intereſt of his mother was employed to fruſtrate his applications, and that ſhe never left any expedient untried by which he might be cut off from the poſſibility of ſupporting life. The ſame diſpoſition ſhe endeavoured to diffuſe among all thoſe over whom nature or fortune gave her any influence, and indeed ſucceeded too well in her deſign, but could not always propagate her effrontery with her cruelty; for ſome of thoſe whom ſhe incited againſt him were aſhamed of their own conduct, and boaſted of that relief which they never gave him.

In this cenſure I do not indiſcriminately involve all his relations; for he has mentioned, with gratitude, the humanity of one lady whoſe name I am now unable to recollect, and to whom, therefore, I cannot pay the praiſes which ſhe deſerves for having acted well in oppoſition to influence, precept, and example.

The punishment which our laws inflict upon those parents who murder their infants is well known, nor has its justice ever been contested; but if they deserve death who destroy a child in its birth, what pains can be severe enough for her who forbears to destroy him only to inflict sharper miseries upon him; who prolongs his life only to make it miserable; and who exposes him, without care and without pity, to the malice of oppression, the caprices of chance, and the temptations of poverty; who rejoices to see him overwhelmed with calamities; and when his own industry, or the charity of others, has enabled him to rise for a short time above his miseries, plunges him again into his former distress?

The kindness of his friends not affording him any constant supply, and the prospect of improving his fortune by enlarging his acquaintance necessarily leading him to places of expense, he found it necessary to endeavour once more at dramatic poetry, for which he was now better qualified by a more extensive knowledge and longer observation: but having been unsuccessful in comedy, though rather for want of opportunities than genius, he resolved now to try whether he should not be more fortunate in exhibiting a tragedy.

The story which he chose for the subject was that of Sir Thomas Overbury, a story well adapted to the stage, though perhaps not far enough removed from

the preſent age to admit properly the fictions neceſſary to complete the plan; for the mind, which naturally loves truth, is always moſt offended with the violation of thoſe truths of which we are moſt certain, and we of courſe conceive thoſe facts moſt certain which approach neareſt to our own time.

Out of this ſtory he formed a tragedy which, if the circumſtances in which he wrote it be conſidered, will afford at once an uncommon proof of ſtrength of genius and evenneſs of mind, of a ſerenity not to be ruffled, and an imagination not to be ſuppreſſed.

During a conſiderable part of the time in which he was employed upon this performance he was without lodging, and often without meat; nor had he any other conveniencies for ſtudy than the fields or the ſtreet allowed him; there he uſed to walk and form his ſpeeches, and afterwards ſtep into a ſhop, beg for a few moments the uſe of the pen and ink, and write down what he had compoſed upon paper which he had picked up by accident.

If the performance of a writer thus diſtreſſed is not perfect, its faults ought ſurely to be imputed to a cauſe very different from want of genius, and muſt rather excite pity than provoke cenſure.

But when, under theſe diſcouragements, the tragedy was finiſhed, there yet remained the labour of introducing it on the ſtage, an undertaking which, to an ingenuous mind, was in a very high degree vexa-

tious and diſguſting; for having little intereſt or reputation, he was obliged to ſubmit himſelf wholly to the players, and admit, with whatever reluctance, the emendations of Mr. Cibber, which he always conſidered as the diſgrace of his performance.

He had indeed in Mr. Hill another critic of a very different claſs, from whoſe friendſhip he received great aſſiſtance on many occaſions, and whom he never mentioned but with the utmoſt tenderneſs and regard. He had been for ſome time diſtinguiſhed by him with very particular kindneſs, and on this occaſion it was natural to apply to him as an author of an eſtabliſhed character. He therefore ſent this tragedy to him, with a ſhort copy of verſes, in which he deſired his correction. Mr. Hill, whoſe humanity and politeneſs are generally known, readily complied with his requeſt; but as he is remarkable for ſingularity of ſentiment, and bold experiments in language, Mr. Savage did not think his play much improved by his innovation, and had even at that time the courage to reject ſeveral paſſages which he could not approve; and, what is ſtill more laudable, Mr. Hill had the generoſity not to reſent the neglect of his alterations, but wrote the prologue and epilogue, in which he touches on the circumſtances of the Author with great tenderneſs.

After all theſe obſtructions and compliances he was only able to bring his play upon the ſtage in the ſum-

mer, when the chief actors had retired, and the reſt were in poſſeſſion of the houſe for their own advantage. Among theſe Mr. Savage was admitted to play the part of Sir Thomas Overbury, by which he gained no great reputation, the theatre being a province for which Nature ſeemed not to have deſigned him; for neither his voice, look, nor geſture, were ſuch as are expected on the ſtage, and he was himſelf ſo much aſhamed of having been reduced to appear as a player, that he always blotted out his name from the liſt when a copy of his tragedy was to be ſhown to his friends.

In the publication of his performance he was more ſucceſsful; for the rays of genius that glimmered in it, that glimmered thro' all the miſts which Poverty and Cibber had been able to ſpread over it, procured him the notice and eſteem of many perſons eminent for their rank, their virtue, and their wit.

Of this play, acted, printed, and dedicated, the accumulated profits aroſe to an hundred pounds, which he thought at that time a very large ſum, having been never maſter of ſo much before.

In the Dedication *, for which he received ten guineas, there is nothing remarkable. The Preface contains a very liberal encomium on the blooming excellencies of Mr. Theophilus Cibber, which Mr. Savage could not, in the latter part of his life, ſee his friends about to read without ſnatching the play out

* To Herbert Tryſt, Eſq. of Hereſordſhire.

of their hands. The generoſity of Mr. Hill did not end on this occaſion; for afterwards, when Mr. Savage's neceſſities returned, he encouraged a ſubſcription to a Miſcellany of Poems in a very extraordinary manner, by publiſhing his ſtory in the Plain Dealer *, with ſome affecting lines †, which he af-

* The Plain Dealer was a periodical paper written by Mr. Hill and Mr. Bond, whom Mr. Savage called the two contending powers of Light and Darkneſs. They wrote by turns each ſix Eſſays, and the character of the work was obſerved regularly to riſe in Mr. Hill's weeks, and fall in Mr. Bond's.

† Hopeleſs, abandon'd, aimleſs, and oppreſs'd,
Loſt to delight, and ev'ry way diſtreſs'd,
Croſs his cold bed in wild diſorder thrown,
Thus ſigh'd Alexis, friendleſs, and alone-----
Why do I breathe?----What joy can being give,
When ſhe who gave me life forgets I live!
Feels not theſe wintry blaſts----nor heeds my ſmart,
But ſhuts me from the ſhelter of her heart!
Saw me expos'd to want! to ſhame! to ſcorn!
To ills!---which make it mis'ry to be born!
Caſt me, regardleſs, on the world's bleak wild!
And bade me be a wretch while yet a child!
Where can he hope for pity, peace, or reſt,
Who moves no ſoftneſs in a mother's breaſt?
Cuſtom, law, reaſon, all! my cauſe forſake,
And Nature ſleeps to keep my woes awake!
Crimes which the cruel ſcarce believe can be,
The kind are guilty of to ruin me.
Ev'n ſhe who bore me blaſts me with her hate,
And, meant my fortune, makes herſelf my fate!
Yet has this ſweet neglecter of my woes
The ſofteſt, tend'reſt, breaſt that Pity knows!
Her eyes ſhed mercy whereſoe'er they ſhine,
And her ſoul melts at ev'ry woe----but mine!
Sure then ſome ſecret fate for guilt unwill'd,
Some ſentence preordain'd to be fulfill'd,
Plung'd me thus deep in Sorrow's ſearching flood,
And waſh'd me from the mem'ry of her blood!
But, oh! whatever cauſe has mov'd her hate,
Let me but ſigh in ſilence at my fate;
The god within perhaps may touch her breaſt,
And when ſhe pities who can be diſtreſt?

ſerts to have been written by Mr. Savage upon the treatment received by him from his mother, but of which he was himſelf the author, as Mr. Savage afterwards declared. Theſe lines, and the paper in which they were inſerted, had a very powerful effect upon all but his mother, whom, by making her cruelty more public, they only hardened in her averſion.

Mr. Hill not only promoted the ſubſcription to the Miſcellany, but furniſhed likewiſe the greateſt part of the poems of which it is compoſed, and particularly The Happy Man, which he publiſhed as a ſpecimen.

The ſubſcriptions of thoſe whom theſe papers ſhould influence to patroniſe merit in diſtreſs, without any other ſolicitation, were directed to be left at Button's Coffeehouſe; and Mr. Savage going thither a few days afterwards, without expectation of any effect from his propoſal, found, to his ſurpriſe, ſeventy guineas *, which had been ſent him in conſequence of the compaſſion excited by Mr. Hill's pathetic repreſentation.

* The names of thoſe who ſo generouſly contributed to his relief having been mentioned in a former account, ought not to be omitted here. They were the Ducheſs of Cleveland, Lady Cheyney, Lady Caſtlemain, Lady Gower, Lady Lechmere, the Ducheſs Dowager and Ducheſs of Rutland, Lady Strafford, the Counteſs Dowager of Warwick, Mrs. Mary Floyer, Mrs. Sofuel Noel, Duke of Rutland, Lord Gainſborough, Lord Milſington, Mr. John Savage.

To this Miſcellany he wrote a preface *, in which

* The Preface is as follows:

Crudelis Mater magis, an Puer improbus ille?
Improbus ille Puer, crudelis tu quoque Mater. VIRG.

My readers, I am afraid, when they obſerve Richard Savage joined ſo cloſe, and ſo conſtantly, to "ſon of the late Earl Ri-"vers," will impute to a ridiculous vanity what is the effect of an unhappy neceſſity, which my hard fortune has thrown me under.---I am to be pardoned for adhering a little tenaciouſly to my father, becauſe my mother will allow me to be no body; and has almoſt reduced me, among heavier afflictions, to that uncommon kind of want which the Indians of America complained of at our firſt ſettling among them, when they came to beg names of the Engliſh, becauſe (ſaid they) we are poor men of ourſelves, and have none we can lay claim to.

The good nature of thoſe to whom I have not the honour to be known would forgive me the ludicrous turn of this beginning, if they knew but how little reaſon I have to be merry.----It was my misfortune to be ſon of the above-mentioned Earl by the late Counteſs of Macclesfield, (now widow of Colonel Henry Bret) whoſe divorce, on occaſion of the amour which I was a conſequence of, has left ſomething on record which I take to be very remarkable; and it is this: Certain of our great judges, in their temporal deciſions, act with a ſpiritual regard to Levitical divinity, and in particular to the Ten Commandments, two of which ſeem, in my caſe, to have viſibly influenced their opinions----"Thou ſhalt not "commit adultery," pointed fulleſt on my mother; but as to "The Lord's viſiting the ſins of the fathers upon the chil-"dren," it was conſidered as what could regard me only; and for that reaſon, I ſuppoſe, it had been inconſiſtent with the rules of ſanctity to aſſign proviſion out of my mother's returned eſtate for ſupport of an infant ſinner.

Thus, while legally the ſon of one Earl, and naturally of another, I am, nominally, no body's ſon at all; for the Lady

he gives an account of his mother's cruelty in a very uncommon ſtrain of humour, and with a gaiety of

having given me too much father, thought it but an equivalent deduction to leave me no mother, by way of balance.---So I am ſported into the world, a kind of ſhuttlecock, between Law and Nature--If Law had not beaten me back by the ſtroke of an act, on purpoſe, I had not been above wit by the privilege of a man of quality; nay, I might have preſerved, into the bargain, the lives of Duke Hamilton and Lord Mohun, whoſe diſpute aroſe from the eſtate of that Earl of Macclesfield whom (but for the mentioned act) I muſt have called Father.---And if Nature had not ſtruck me off with a ſtranger blow than Law did, the other Earl, who was moſt emphatically my father, could never have been told I was dead, when he was about to enable me, by his will, to have lived to ſome purpoſe. An unaccountable ſeverity of a mother! whom I was then not old enough to have deſerved it from, and by which I am a ſingle unhappy inſtance among that nobleman's natural children, and thrown friendleſs on the world, without means of ſupporting myſelf, and without authority to apply to thoſe whoſe duty I know it is to ſupport me.

Thus, however ill qualified I am to live by my wits, I have the beſt plea in the world for attempting it, ſince it is too apparent that I was born to it.---Having wearied my judgment with fruitleſs endeavours to be happy, I gave the reins to my fancy, that I might learn at leaſt to be eaſy.

But I ceaſe a while to ſpeak of myſelf, that I may ſay ſomething of my Miſcellany.---I was furniſhed, by the verſes of my friends, with wit enough to deſerve a ſubſcription, but I wanted another much more profitable quality, which ſhould have emboldened me to ſolicit it, (another of my wants that, I hope, may be imputed to my mother!) I had met with little encouragement but for the endeavours of ſome few gentlemen in my behalf, who were generous enough to conſider my ill fortune as a merit that entitled me to their notice.

Among theſe I am particularly indebted to the author of the Plain Dealer, who was pleaſed, in two of his papers, (which

imagination which the ſucceſs of his ſubſcription probably produced.

I entreat his pardon for reprinting before my Miſcellany) to point out my unhappy ſtory to the world with ſo touching a humanity, and ſo good an effect, that many perſons of quality, of all ranks, and of both ſexes, diſtinguiſhed themſelves with the promptneſs he had hinted to the noble-minded; and not ſtaying till they were applied to, ſent me the honour of their ſubſcriptions, in the moſt liberal and handſome manner, for encouragement of my undertaking.

I ought here to acknowledge ſeveral favours from Mr. Hill, whoſe writings are a ſhining ornament of this Miſcellany; but I wave detaining my readers, and beg leave to refer them to a copy of verſes called The Friend *, which I have taken the liberty to addreſs to that gentleman.

To return to the Lady, my mother.---Had the celebrated Mr. Locke been acquainted with her example, it had certainly appeared in his chapter againſt innate practical principles, becauſe it would have completed his inſtances of enormities; ſome of which, though not exactly in the order that he mentions them, are as follow---"Have there not been," ſays he, "whole nations, and thoſe of the moſt civilized people, a-"mongſt whom the expoſing their children to periſh by want, "or wild beaſts, has been a practice as little condemned or "ſcrupled as the begetting them?" Were I inclinable to be ſerious, I could eaſily prove that I have not been more gently dealt with by Mrs. Bret; but if this is any way foreign to my caſe, I ſhall find a nearer example in the whimſical one that enſues.

"It is familiar," ſays the afore-cited author, "among the "Mengrelians, a people profeſſing Chriſtianity, to bury their "children alive without ſcruple."---There are indeed ſundry ſects of Chriſtians, and I have often wondered which could be my mamma's, but now I find ſhe piouſly profeſſes and practiſes Chriſtianity after the manner of the Mengrelians; ſhe induſtriouſly obſcured me, when my fortune depended on my

* See under *Epiſtles*.

The Dedication is addreſſed to the Lady Mary Wortley Montague, whom he flatters without re-

being known, and, in that ſenſe, ſhe may be ſaid to have buried me alive; and ſure, like a Mengrelian, ſhe muſt have committed the action without ſcruple; for ſhe is a woman of ſpirit, and can ſee the conſequence without remorſe.---"The "Caribees," continues my author, "were wont to caſtrate "their children, in order to fat and eat them."---Here indeed I can draw no parallel; for to ſpeak juſtice of the Lady, ſhe never contributed ought to have me pampered, but always promoted my being ſtarved; nor did ſhe, even in my infancy, betray fondneſs enough to be ſuſpected of a deſign to devour me; but, on the contrary, not enduring me ever to approach her, offered a bribe to have me ſhipped off, in an odd manner, to one of the plantations.----When I was about fifteen her affection began to awake, and had I but known my intereſt, I had been handſomely provided for. In ſhort, I was ſolicited to be bound apprentice to a very honeſt and reputable occupation---a ſhoemaker! an offer which I undutifully rejected. I was, in fine, unwilling to underſtand her in a literal ſenſe, and hoped that, like the prophets of old, ſhe might have hinted her mind in a kind of parable, or proverbial way of ſpeaking; as thus---That one time or other I might, on due application, have the honour of taking the length of her foot.

Mr. Locke mentions another ſet of people that diſpatch their children, if a pretended aſtrologer declares them to have unhappy ſtars.---Perhaps my mamma has procured ſome cunning man to calculate my nativity; or having had ſome ominous dream, which preceded my birth, the dire event may have appeared to her in the dark and dreary bottom of a china cup, where coffee ſtains are often conſulted for propheſies, and held as infallible as were the leaves of the ancient Sibyls.---To be partly ſerious, I am rather willing to wrong her judgment, by ſuſpecting it to be tainted a little with the tenets of ſuperſtition, than ſuppoſe ſhe can be miſtreſs of a ſeared conſcience, and act on no principle at all.

ſerve, and, to confeſs the truth, with very little art *. The ſame obſervation may be extended to all his Dedications: his compliments are conſtrained and violent, heaped together without the grace of order or the decency of introduction: he ſeems to have written his panegyrics for the peruſal only of his patrons, and to have imagined that he had no other taſk than to pamper them with praiſes, however groſs; and that flattery would make its way to the heart without the aſſiſtance of elegance or invention.

Soon afterwards the death of the King furniſhed a general ſubject for a poetical conteſt, in which Mr. Savage engaged, and is allowed to have carried the prize of honour from his competitors; but I know not whether he gained by his performance any other advantage than the increaſe of his reputation; though

* This the following extract from it will prove.

---"Since our country has been honoured with the glory of "your wit, as elevated and immortal as your ſoul, it no long- "er remains a doubt whether your ſex have ſtrength of mind "in proportion to their ſweetneſs. There is ſomething in "your verſes as diſtinguiſhed as your air---They are as ſtrong "as truth, as deep as reaſon, as clear as innocence, and as "ſmooth as beauty---They contain a nameleſs and peculiar "mixture of force and grace, which is at once ſo movingly "ſerene, and ſo majeſtically lovely, that it is too amiable to "appear any where but in your eyes and in your writings.

"As Fortune is not more my enemy than I am the enemy "of flattery, I know not how I can forbear this application to "your Ladyſhip, becauſe there is ſcarce a poſſibility that I "ſhould ſay more than I believe when I am ſpeaking of your "Excellence."----

it muſt certainly have been with farther views that he prevailed upon himſelf to attempt a ſpecies of writing of which all the topics had been long before exhauſted, and which was made at once difficult by the multitudes that had failed in it, and thoſe that had ſucceeded.

He was now advancing in reputation, and though frequently involved in very diſtreſsful perplexities, appeared however to be gaining upon mankind, when both his fame and his life were endangered by an event of which it is not yet determined whether it ought to be mentioned as a crime or a calamity.

On the 20th of November 1727 Mr. Savage came from Richmond, where he then lodged, that he might purſue his ſtudies with leſs interruption, with an intent to diſcharge another lodging which he had in Weſtminſter, and accidentally meeting two gentlemen his acquaintances, whoſe names were Merchant and Gregory, he went in with them to a neighbouring coffeehouſe, and ſat drinking till it was late, it being in no time of Mr. Savage's life any part of his character to be the firſt of the company that deſired to ſeparate. He would willingly have gone to bed in the ſame houſe, but there was not room for the whole company, and therefore they agreed to ramble about the ſtreets, and divert themſelves with ſuch amuſements as ſhould offer themſelves till morning.

In their walk they happened unluckily to diſcover

light in Robinſon's Coffeehouſe near Charing-croſs, and therefore went in. Merchant, with ſome rudeneſs, demanded a room, and was told that there was a good fire in the next parlour, which the company were about to leave, being then paying their reckoning. Merchant, not ſatisfied with this anſwer, ruſhed into the room, and was followed by his companions. He then petulantly placed himſelf between the company and the fire, and ſoon after kicked down the table. This produced a quarrel, ſwords were drawn on both ſides, and one Mr. James Sinclair was killed. Savage having wounded likewiſe a maid that held him, forced his way with Merchant out of the houſe; but being intimidated and confuſed, without reſolution either to fly or ſtay, they were taken in a back court by one of the company, and ſome ſoldiers whom he had called to his aſſiſtance.

Being ſecured and guarded that night, they were, in the morning, carried before three juſtices, who committed them to the Gatehouſe, from whence, upon the death of Mr. Sinclair, which happened the ſame day, they were removed in the night to Newgate, where they were however treated with ſome diſtinction, exempted from the ignominy of chains, and confined not among the common criminals, but in the Preſs-yard.

When the day of trial came the court was crowded in a very unuſual manner, and the public appeared

to intereſt itſelf as in a cauſe of general concern. The witneſſes againſt Mr. Savage and his friends were, the woman who kept the houſe, which was a houſe of ill fame, and her maid, the men who were in the room with Mr. Sinclair, and a woman of the Town, who had been drinking with them, and with whom one of them had been ſeen in bed. They ſwore, in general, that Merchant gave the provocation which Savage and Gregory drew their ſwords to juſtify; that Savage drew firſt, and that he ſtabbed Sinclair when he was not in a poſture of defence, or while Gregory commanded his ſword; that after he had given the thruſt he turned pale, and would have retired, but that the maid clung round him, and one of the company endeavoured to detain him, from whom he broke, by cutting the maid on the head, but was afterwards taken in a court.

There was ſome difference in their depoſitions; one did not ſee Savage give the wound, another ſaw it given when Sinclair held his point towards the ground; and the woman of the Town aſſerted that ſhe did not ſee Sinclair's ſword at all. This difference, however, was very far from amounting to inconſiſtency, but it was ſufficient to ſhew that the hurry of the diſpute was ſuch that it was not eaſy to diſcover the truth with relation to particular circumſtances, and that therefore ſome deductions were to be made from the credibility of the teſtimonies.

Sinclair had declared ſeveral times before his death that he received his wound from Savage, nor did Savage at his trial deny the fact, but endeavoured partly to extenuate it by urging the ſuddenneſs of the whole action, and the impoſſibility of any ill deſign or premeditated malice, and partly to juſtify it by the neceſſity of ſelf-defence, and the hazard of his own life, if he had loſt that opportunity of giving the thruſt. He obſerved that neither reaſon nor law obliged a man to wait for the blow which was threatened, and which, if he ſhould ſuffer it, he might never be able to return; that it was always allowable to prevent an aſſault, and to preſerve life by taking away that of the adverſary by whom it was endangered.

With regard to the violence with which he endeavoured to eſcape, he declared that it was not his deſign to fly from juſtice, or decline a trial, but to avoid the expenſes and ſeverities of a priſon, and that he intended to have appeared at the bar without compulſion.

This defence, which took up more than an hour, was heard by the multitude that thronged the court with the moſt attentive and reſpectful ſilence. Thoſe who thought he ought not to be acquitted owned that applauſe could not be refuſed him; and thoſe who before pitied his misfortunes now reverenced his abilities.

The witneſſes which appeared againſt him were proved to be perſons of characters which did not en-

title them to much credit; a common ſtrumpet, a woman by whom ſtrumpets were entertained, and a man by whom they were ſupported; and the character of Savage was, by ſeveral perſons of diſtinction, aſſerted to be that of a modeſt inoffenſive man, not inclined to broils or to inſolence, and who had, to that time, been only known for his misfortunes and his wit.

Had his audience been his judges he had undoubtedly been acquitted; but Mr. Page, who was then upon the bench, treated him with his uſual inſolence and ſeverity; and when he had ſummed up the evidence, endeavoured to exaſperate the jury, as Mr. Savage uſed to relate it, with this eloquent harangue.

"Gentlemen of the jury, you are to conſider that "Mr. Savage is a very great man, a much greater "man than you or I, Gentlemen of the jury; that he "wears very fine clothes, much finer clothes than you "or I, Gentlemen of the jury; that he has abundance "of money in his pocket, much more money than "you or I, Gentlemen of the jury; but, Gentlemen "of the jury, is it not a very hard caſe, Gentlemen "of the jury, that Mr. Savage ſhould therefore kill "you or me, Gentlemen of the jury?"

Mr. Savage hearing his defence thus miſrepreſented, and the men who were to decide his fate incited againſt him by invidious compariſons, reſolutely aſſerted that his cauſe was not candidly explained, and

began to recapitulate what he had before ſaid with regard to his condition, and the neceſſity of endeavouring to eſcape the expenſes of impriſonment; but the Judge having ordered him to be ſilent, and repeated his orders without effect, commanded that he ſhould be taken from the bar by force.

The jury then heard the opinion of the Judge, that good characters were of no weight againſt poſitive evidence, though they might turn the ſcale where it was doubtful; and that though, when two men attack each other, the death of either is only manſlaughter; but where one is the aggreſſor, as in the caſe before them, and in purſuance of his firſt attack kills the other, the law ſuppoſes the action, however ſudden, to be malicious. They then deliberated upon their verdict, and determined that Mr. Savage and Mr. Gregory were guilty of murder, and Mr. Merchant, who had no ſword, only of manſlaughter.

Thus ended this memorable trial, which laſted eight hours. Mr. Savage and Mr. Gregory were conducted back to priſon, where they were more cloſely confined, and loaded with irons of fifty pounds weight. Four days afterwards they were ſent back to the court to receive ſentence; on which occaſion Mr. Savage made, as far as it could be retained in memory, the following ſpeech.

"It is now, my Lord, too late to offer any thing "by way of defence or vindication; nor can we ex-

"pect ought from your Lordſhips, in this court, but "the ſentence which the law requires you, as judges, "to pronounce againſt men of our calamitous condi- "tion.—But we are alſo perſuaded that, as mere "men, and out of this ſeat of rigorous juſtice, you "are ſuſceptive of the tender paſſions, and too hu- "mane not to commiſerate the unhappy ſituation of "thoſe whom the law ſometimes perhaps—exacts— "from you to pronounce upon. No doubt you di- "ſtinguiſh between offences which ariſe out of pre- "meditation and a diſpoſition habituated to vice or "immorality, and tranſgreſſions which are the un- "happy and unforeſeen effects of caſual abſence of "reaſon and ſudden impulſe of paſſion; we there- "fore hope you will contribute all you can to an ex- "tenſion of that mercy which the gentlemen of the "jury have been pleaſed to ſhew Mr. Merchant, who "(allowing facts aſworn againſt us by the evidence) "has led us into this our calamity. I hope this will "not be conſtrued as if we meant to reflect upon that "gentleman, or remove any thing from us upon him, "or that we repine the more at our fate becauſe he "has no participation of it: no, my Lord! for my "part, I declare nothing could more ſoften my grief "than to be without any companion in ſo great a "misfortune."

Mr. Savage had now no hopes of life but from the mercy of the Crown, which was very earneſtly ſoli-

cited by his friends, and which, with whatever difficulty the ſtory may obtain belief, was obſtructed only by his mother.

To prejudice the Queen againſt him ſhe made uſe of an incident which was omitted in the order of time, that it might be mentioned together with the purpoſe which it was made to ſerve. Mr. Savage, when he had diſcovered his birth, had an inceſſant deſire to ſpeak to his mother, who always avoided him in public, and refuſed him admiſſion into her houſe.

One evening walking, as it was his cuſtom, in the ſtreet that ſhe inhabited, he ſaw the door of her houſe by accident open; he entered it, and, finding no perſons in the paſſage to hinder him, went up ſtairs to ſalute her. She diſcovered him before he could enter her chamber, alarmed the family with the moſt diſtreſsful outcries, and when ſhe had by her ſcreams gathered them about her, ordered them to drive out of the houſe that villain who had forced himſelf in upon her, and endeavoured to murder her. Savage, who had attempted with the moſt ſubmiſſive tenderneſs to ſoften her rage, hearing her utter ſo deteſtable an accuſation, thought it prudent to retire, and, I believe, never attempted afterwards to ſpeak to her.

But, ſhocked as he was with her falſehood and her cruelty, he imagined that ſhe intended no other uſe of her lie than to ſet herſelf free from his embraces and ſolicitations, and was very far from ſuſpecting that

ſhe would treaſure it in her memory as an inſtrument of future wickedneſs, or that ſhe would endeavour, for this fictitious aſſault, to deprive him of his life.

But when the Queen was ſolicited for his pardon, and informed of the ſevere treatments which he had ſuffered from his Judge, ſhe anſwered, that however unjuſtifiable might be the manner of his trial, or whatever extenuation the action for which he was condemned might admit, ſhe could not think that man a proper object of the King's mercy who had been capable of entering his mother's houſe in the night with an intent to murder her.

By whom this atrocious calumny had been tranſmitted to the Queen; whether ſhe that invented had the front to relate it; whether ſhe found any one weak enough to credit it, or corrupt enough to concur with her in her hateful deſign, I know not; but methods had been taken to perſuade the Queen ſo ſtrongly of the truth of it, that ſhe for a long time refuſed to hear any of thoſe who petitioned for his life.

Thus had Savage periſhed by the evidence of a bawd, a ſtrumpet, and his mother, had not juſtice and compaſſion procured him an advocate of rank too great to be rejected unheard, and of virtue too eminent to be heard without being believed. His merit and his calamities happened to reach the ear of the Counteſs of Hertford, who engaged in his ſupport with all the tenderneſs that is excited by pity, and all

the zeal which is kindled by generoſity, and demanding an audience of the Queen laid before her the whole ſeries of his mother's cruelty, expoſed the improbability of an accuſation by which he was charged with an intent to commit a murder that could produce no advantage, and ſoon convinced her how little his former conduct could deſerve to be mentioned as a reaſon for extraordinary ſeverity.

The interpoſition of this Lady was ſo ſucceſsful, that he was ſoon after admitted to bail, and on the 9th of March 1728 pleaded the King's pardon.

It is natural to inquire upon what motives his mother could perſecute him in a manner ſo outrageous and implacable; for what reaſon ſhe could employ all the acts of malice, and all the ſnares of calumny, to take away the life of her own ſon, of a ſon who never injured her, who was never ſupported by her expenſe, nor obſtructed any proſpect of pleaſure or advantage; why ſhe ſhould endeavour to deſtroy him by a lie, a lie which could not gain credit, but muſt vaniſh of itſelf at the firſt moment of examination; and of which only this can be ſaid to make it probable, that it may be obſerved from her conduct that the moſt execrable crimes are ſometimes committed without apparent temptation.

This mother is ſtill alive, and may perhaps even yet, though her malice was ſo often defeated, enjoy the pleaſure of reflecting, that the life which ſhe often

endeavoured to deſtroy was at leaſt ſhortened by her maternal offices; that though ſhe could not tranſport her ſon to the plantations, bury him in the ſhop of a mechanic, or haſten the hand of the public executioner, ſhe has yet had the ſatisfaction of imbittering all his hours, and forcing him into exigencies that hurried on his death.

It is by no means neceſſary to aggravate the enormity of this woman's conduct, by placing it in oppoſition to that of the Counteſs of Hertford; no one can fail to obſerve how much more amiable it is to relieve than to oppreſs, and to reſcue innocence from deſtruction than to deſtroy without an injury.

Mr. Savage, during his impriſonment, his trial, and the time in which he lay under ſentence of death, behaved with great firmneſs and equality of mind, and confirmed by his fortitude the eſteem of thoſe who before admired him for his abilities. The peculiar circumſtances of his life were made more generally known by a ſhort account * which was then publiſhed, and of which ſeveral thouſands were in a few weeks diſperſed over the nation; and the compaſſion of mankind operated ſo powerfully in his favour, that he was enabled, by frequent preſents, not only to ſupport himſelf, but to aſſiſt Mr. Gregory in priſon; and when he was pardoned and releaſed he found the number of his friends not leſſened.

* Written by Mr. Berkingham and another gentleman.

The nature of the act for which he had been tried was in itſelf doubtful; of the evidences which appeared againſt him the character of the man was not unexceptionable, that of the woman notoriouſly infamous: ſhe whoſe teſtimony chiefly influenced the jury to condemn him afterwards retracted her aſſertions. He always himſelf denied that he was drunk, as had been generally reported. Mr. Gregory, who is now Collector of Antigua, is ſaid to declare him far leſs criminal than he was imagined even by ſome who favoured him; and Page himſelf afterwards confeſſed that he had treated him with uncommon rigour. When all theſe particulars are rated together, perhaps the memory of Savage may not be much ſullied by his trial.

Some time after he had obtained his liberty he met in the ſtreet the woman that had ſworn with ſo much malignity againſt him. She informed him that ſhe was in diſtreſs, and, with a degree of confidence not eaſily attainable, deſired him to relieve her. He, inſtead of inſulting her miſery, and taking pleaſure in the calamities of one who had brought his life into danger, reproved her gently for her perjury, and changing the only guinea that he had, divided it equally between her and himſelf.

This is an action which in ſome ages would have made a ſaint, and perhaps in others a hero, and which, without an hyperbolical encomium, muſt be allowed

to be an inſtance of uncommon generoſity, an act of complicated virtue, by which he at once relieved the poor, corrected the vicious, and forgave an enemy; by which he at once remitted the ſtrongeſt provocations, and exerciſed the moſt ardent charity.

Compaſſion was indeed the diſtinguiſhing quality of Savage; he never appeared inclined to take advantage of weakneſs, to attack the defenceleſs, or to preſs upon the falling; whoever was diſtreſſed was certain at leaſt of his good wiſhes; and when he could give no aſſiſtance to extricate them from misfortunes he endeavoured to ſooth them by ſympathy and tenderneſs.

But when his heart was not ſoftened by the ſight of miſery he was ſometimes obſtinate in his reſentment, and did not quickly loſe the remembrance of an injury. He always continued to ſpeak with anger of the inſolence and partiality of Page, and a ſhort time before his death revenged it by a ſatire.

It is natural to inquire in what terms Mr. Savage ſpoke of this fatal action when the danger was over, and he was under no neceſſity of uſing any art to ſet his conduct in the faireſt light. He was not willing to dwell upon it, and if he tranſiently mentioned it, appeared neither to conſider himſelf as a murderer nor as a man wholly free from the guilt of blood *. How much and how long he regretted it appeared in

* In one of his letters he ſtyles it "a fatal quarrel but too "well known."

a poem which he published many years afterwards. On occasion of a copy of verses, in which the fallings of good men were recounted, and in which the author had endeavoured to illustrate his position, that "the best may sometimes deviate from virtue," by an instance of murder committed by Savage in the heat of wine, Savage remarked that it was no very just representation of a good man to suppose him liable to drunkenness, and disposed in his riots to cut throats.

He was now indeed at liberty, but was, as before, without any other support than accidental favours and uncertain patronage afforded him, sources by which he was sometimes very liberally supplied, and which at other times were suddenly stopped; so that he spent his life between want and plenty, or, what was yet worse, between beggary and extravagance; for as whatever he received was the gift of Chance, which might as well favour him at one time as another, he was tempted to squander what he had, because he always hoped to be immediately supplied.

Another cause of his profusion was the absurd kindness of his friends, who at once rewarded and enjoyed his abilities by treating him at taverns, and habituated him to pleasures which he could not afford to enjoy, and which he was not able to deny himself, tho' he purchased the luxury of a single night by the anguish of cold and hunger for a week.

The experience of theſe inconveniencies determined him to endeavour after ſome ſettled income, which, having long found ſubmiſſion and entreaties fruitleſs, he attempted to extort from his mother by rougher methods. He had now, as he acknowledged, loſt that tenderneſs for her which the whole ſeries of her cruelty had not been able wholly to repreſs, till he found, by the efforts which ſhe made for his deſtruction, that ſhe was not content with refuſing to aſſiſt him, and being neutral in his ſtruggles with poverty, but was as ready to ſnatch every opportunity of adding to his misfortunes, and that ſhe was to be conſidered as an enemy implacably malicious, whom nothing but his blood could ſatisfy: he therefore threatened to haraſs her with lampoons, and to publiſh a copious narrative of her conduct, unleſs ſhe conſented to purchaſe an exemption from infamy by allowing him a penſion.

This expedient proved ſucceſsful: whether ſhame ſtill ſurvived though virtue was extinct, or whether her relations had more delicacy than herſelf, and imagined that ſome of the darts which Satire might point at her would glance upon them, Lord Tyrconnel, whatever were his motives, upon his promiſe to lay aſide his deſign of expoſing the cruelty of his mother, received him into his family, treated him as his equal, and engaged to allow him a penſion of two hundred pounds a-year.

This was the golden part of Mr. Savage's life, and for ſome time he had no reaſon to complain of Fortune; his appearance was ſplendid, his expenſes large, and his acquaintance extenſive. He was courted by all who endeavoured to be thought men of genius, and careſſed by all who valued themſelves upon a refined taſte. To admire Mr. Savage was a proof of diſcernment, and to be acquainted with him was a title to poetical reputation: his preſence was ſufficient to make any place of public entertainment popular, and his approbation and example conſtituted the faſhion: ſo powerful is genius when it is inveſted with the glitter of affluence! Men willingly pay to fortune that regard which they owe to merit, and are pleaſed, when they have an opportunity, at once of gratifying their vanity and practiſing their duty.

This interval of proſperity furniſhed him with opportunities of enlarging his knowledge of human nature, by contemplating life from its higheſt gradations to its loweſt: and had he afterwards applied to dramatic poetry he would perhaps not have had many ſuperiors; for as he never ſuffered any ſcene to paſs before his eyes without notice, he had treaſured in his mind all the different combinations of paſſions, and the innumerable mixtures of vice and virtue which diſtinguiſh one character from another; and as his conception was ſtrong his expreſſions were clear; he

eaſily received impreſſions from objects, and very forcibly tranſmitted them to others.

Of his exact obſervations on human life he has left a proof which would do honour to the greateſt names, in a ſmall pamphlet called The Author to be Let, where he introduces Iſcariot Hackney, a proſtitute ſcribbler, giving an account of his birth, his education, his diſpoſition and morals, habits of life, and maxims of conduct. In the introduction are related many ſecret hiſtories of the petty writers of that time, but ſometimes mixed with ungenerous reflections on their birth, their circumſtances, or thoſe of their relations; nor can it be denied that ſome paſſages are ſuch as Iſcariot Hackney might himſelf have produced.

He was accuſed, likewiſe, of living in an appearance of friendſhip with ſome whom he ſatirized, and of making uſe of the confidence which he gained by a ſeeming kindneſs to diſcover failings and expoſe them: it muſt be confeſſed that Mr. Savage's eſteem was no very certain poſſeſſion, and that he would lampoon at one time thoſe whom he had praiſed at another.

It may be alleged that the ſame man may change his principles, and that he who was once deſervedly commended may be afterwards ſatirized with equal juſtice, or that the poet was dazzled with the appearance of virtue, and found the man whom he had ce-

lebrated, when he had an opportunity of examining him more nearly, unworthy of the panegyric which he had too haſtily beſtowed; and that as a falſe ſatire ought to be recanted for the ſake of him whoſe reputation may be injured, falſe praiſe ought likewiſe to be obviated, leſt the diſtinction between vice and virtue ſhould be loſt, leſt a bad man ſhould be truſted upon the credit of his encomiaſt, or leſt others ſhould endeavour to obtain the like praiſes by the ſame means.

But though theſe excuſes may be often plauſible, and ſometimes juſt, they are very ſeldom ſatisfactory to mankind; and the writer who is not conſtant to his ſubject quickly ſinks into contempt, his ſatire loſes its force, and his panegyric its value, and he is only conſidered at one time as a flatterer and as a calumniator at another.

To avoid theſe imputations it is only neceſſary to follow the rules of virtue, and to preſerve an unvaried regard to truth: for though it is undoubtedly poſſible that a man, however cautious, may be ſometimes deceived by an artful appearance of virtue, or by falſe evidences of guilt, ſuch errors will not be frequent; and it will be allowed that the name of an author would never have been made contemptible had no man ever ſaid what he did not think, or miſled others but when he was himſelf deceived.

If The Author to be Let was first published in a single pamphlet, and afterwards inserted in a collection of pieces relating to The Dunciad, which were addressed by Mr. Savage to the Earl of Middlesex, in a dedication which he was prevailed upon to sign, though he did not write it, and in which there are some positions that the true author would perhaps not have published under his own name, and on which Mr. Savage afterwards reflected with no great satisfaction; the enumeration of the bad effects of the uncontrolled freedom of the press, and the assertion that the "liberties taken by the writers of Journals "with their superiors were exorbitant and unjustifi-"able," very ill became men who have themselves not always shewn the exactest regard to the laws of subordination in their writings, and who have often satirized those that at least thought themselves their superiors, as they were eminent for their hereditary rank, and employed in the highest offices of the kingdom: but this is only an instance of that partiality which almost every man indulges with regard to himself. The liberty of the press is a blessing when we are inclined to write against others, and a calamity when we find ourselves overborne by the multitude of our assailants; as the power of the Crown is always thought too great by those who suffer by its influence, and too little by those in whose favour it is exerted; and a standing army is generally accounted necessary by those who

command, and dangerous and oppreſſive by thoſe who ſupport it.

Mr. Savage was likewiſe very far from believing that the letters annexed to each ſpecies of bad poets in the Bathos were, as he was directed to aſſert, "ſet "down at random;" for when he was charged by one of his friends with putting his name to ſuch an improbability, he had no other anſwer to make than that "he did not think of it;" and his friend had too much tenderneſs to reply, that next to the crime of writing contrary to what he thought, was that of writing without thinking.

After having remarked what is falſe in this dedication, it is proper that I obſerve the impartiality which I recommend, by declaring what Savage aſſerted, that the account of the circumſtances which attended the publication of The Dunciad, however ſtrange and improbable, was exactly true.

The publication of this piece at this time raiſed Mr. Savage a great number of enemies among thoſe that were attacked by Mr. Pope, with whom he was conſidered as a kind of confederate, and whom he was ſuſpected of ſupplying with private intelligence and ſecret incidents; ſo that the ignominy of an informer was added to the terror of a ſatiriſt

That he was not altogether free from literary hypocriſy, and that he ſometimes ſpoke one thing and wrote another, cannot be denied, becauſe he himſelf

confeſſed, that when he lived in great familiarity with Dennis he wrote an epigram againſt him *.

Mr. Savage, however, ſet all the malice of all the pigmy writers at defiance, and thought the friendſhip of Mr. Pope cheaply purchaſed by being expoſed to their cenſure and their hatred; nor had he any reaſon to repent of the preference, for he found Mr. Pope a ſteady and unalienable friend almoſt to the end of his life.

About this time, notwithſtanding his avowed neutrality with regard to party, he publiſhed a panegyric on Sir Robert Walpole, for which he was rewarded by him with twenty guineas, a ſum not very large, if either the excellence of the performance, or the affluence of the patron, be conſidered; but greater than he afterwards obtained from a perſon of yet higher rank, and more deſirous in appearance of being diſtinguiſhed as a patron of literature.

As he was very far from approving the conduct of Sir Robert Walpole, and in converſation mentioned him ſometimes with acrimony, and generally with contempt; as he was one of thoſe who were always

* This epigram was, I believe, never publiſhed.

Should Dennis publiſh you had ſtabb'd your brother,
Lampoon'd your monarch, or debauch'd your mother,
Say what revenge on Dennis can be had,
Too dull for laughter, for reply too mad?
On one ſo poor you cannot take the law,
On one ſo old your ſword you ſcorn to draw:
Uncag'd, then, let the harmleſs monſter rage,
Secure in dulneſs, madneſs, want, and age.

zealous in their aſſertions of the juſtice of the late oppoſition, jealous of the rights of the people, and alarmed by the long-continued triumph of the Court, it was natural to aſk him what could induce him to employ his poetry in praiſe of that man who was, in his opinion, an enemy to liberty, and an oppreſſor of his country? He alleged that he was then dependent upon the Lord Tyrconnel, who was an implicit follower of the miniſtry, and that being enjoined by him, not without menaces, to write in praiſe of his leader, he had not reſolution ſufficient to ſacrifice the pleaſure of affluence to that of integrity.

On this, and on many other occaſions, he was ready to lament the miſery of living at the tables of other men, which was his fate from the beginning to the end of his life; for I know not whether he ever had, for three months together, a ſettled habitation, in which he could claim a right of reſidence.

To this unhappy ſtate it is juſt to impute much of the inconſtancy of his conduct; for though a readineſs to comply with the inclination of others was no part of his natural character, yet he was ſometimes obliged to relax his obſtinacy, and ſubmit his own judgment, and even his virtue, to the government of thoſe by whom he was ſupported; ſo that if his miſeries were ſometimes the conſequences of his faults, he ought not yet to be wholly excluded from compaſſion, becauſe his faults were very often the effects of his misfortunes.

In this gay period of his life, while he was ſurrounded by affluence and pleaſure, he publiſhed The Wanderer, a moral poem, of which the deſign is compriſed in theſe lines:

I fly all public care, all venal ſtrife,
To try the ſtill compar'd with active life;
To prove by theſe the ſons of men may owe
The fruits of bliſs to burſting clouds of woe;
That ev'n Calamity, by thought refin'd,
Inſpirits and adorns the thinking mind.

And more diſtinctly in the following paſſage:

By woe the ſoul to daring action ſwells;
By woe in plaintleſs patience it excels;
From patience prudent clear experience ſprings,
And traces knowledge thro' the courſe of things;
Thence hope is form'd, thence fortitude, ſucceſs,
Renown---whate'er men covet and careſs.

This performance was always conſidered by himſelf as his maſterpiece; and Mr. Pope, when he aſked his opinion of it, told him that he read it once over and was not diſpleaſed with it, that it gave him more pleaſure at the ſecond peruſal, and delighted him ſtill more at the third.

It has been generally objected to The Wanderer that the diſpoſition of the parts is irregular; that the deſign is obſcure, and the plan perplexed; that the images, however beautiful, ſucceed each other without order; and that the whole performance is not ſo much a regular fabric as a heap of ſhining materials thrown together by accident, which ſtrikes rather with the ſolemn magnificence of a ſtupendous ruin than the elegant grandeur of a finiſhed pile.

This criticiſm is univerſal, and therefore it is reaſonable to believe it at leaſt in a great degree juſt; but Mr. Savage was always of a contrary opinion, and thought his drift could only be miſſed by negligence or ſtupidity, and that the whole plan was regular, and the parts diſtinct.

It was never denied to abound with ſtrong repreſentations of nature, and juſt obſervations upon life; and it may eaſily be obſerved, that moſt of his pictures have an evident tendency to illuſtrate his firſt great poſition, "that good is the conſequence of evil." The ſun that burns up the mountains fructifies the vales; the deluge that ruſhes down the broken rocks with dreadful impetuoſity is ſeparated into purling brooks; and the rage of the hurricane purifies the air.

Even in this poem he has not been able to forbear one touch upon the cruelty of his mother, which, though remarkably delicate and tender, is a proof how deep an impreſſion it had upon his mind.

This muſt be at leaſt acknowledged, which ought to be thought equivalent to many other excellencies, that this poem can promote no other purpoſes than thoſe of virtue, and that it is written with a very ſtrong ſenſe of the efficacy of religion.

But my province is rather to give the hiſtory of Mr. Savage's performances than to diſplay their beauties, or to obviate the criticiſms which they have occaſioned, and therefore I ſhall not dwell upon the par-

ticular paſſages which deſerve applauſe: I ſhall neither ſhow the excellence of his deſcriptions, nor expatiate on the terrific portrait of ſuicide, nor point out the artful touches by which he has diſtinguiſhed the intellectual features of the rebels who ſuffer death in his laſt canto: it is, however, proper to obſerve that Mr. Savage always declared the characters wholly fictitious, and without the leaſt alluſion to any real perſons or actions.

From a poem ſo diligently laboured, and ſo ſucceſſfully finiſhed, it might be reaſonably expected that he ſhould have gained conſiderable advantage; nor can it, without ſome degree of indignation and concern, be told that he ſold the copy for ten guineas, of which he afterwards returned two, that the two laſt ſheets of the work might be reprinted, of which he had in his abſence intruſted the correction to a friend, who was too indolent to perform it with accuracy.

A ſuperſtitious regard to the correction of his ſheets was one of Mr. Savage's peculiarities: he often altered, reviſed, recurred to his firſt reading or punctuation, and again adopted the alteration; he was dubious and irreſolute without end, as on a queſtion of the laſt importance, and at laſt was ſeldom ſatisfied: the intruſion or omiſſion of a comma was ſufficient to diſcompoſe him, and he would lament an error of a ſingle letter as a heavy calamity. In one of his letters relating to an impreſſion of ſome verſes, he re-

marks that he had, with regard to the correction of the proof, "a ſpell upon him;" and indeed the anxiety with which he dwelt upon the minuteſt and moſt trifling niceties deſerved no other name than that of faſcination.

That he ſold ſo valuable a performance for ſo ſmall a price was not to be imputed either to neceſſity, by which the learned and ingenious are often obliged to ſubmit to very hard conditions, or to avarice, by which the bookſellers are frequently incited to oppreſs that genius by which they are ſupported, but to that intemperate deſire of pleaſure, and habitual ſlavery to his paſſions, which involved him in many perplexities; he happened at that time to be engaged in the purſuit of ſome trifling gratification, and, being without money for the preſent occaſion, ſold his poem to the firſt bidder, and perhaps for the firſt price that was propoſed, and would probably have been content with leſs, if leſs had been offered him.

This poem was addreſſed to the Lord Tyrconnel not only in the firſt lines, but in a formal dedication, filled with the higheſt ſtrains of panegyric, and the warmeſt profeſſions of gratitude, but by no means remarkable for delicacy of connection or elegance of ſtyle.

Theſe praiſes in a ſhort time he found himſelf inclined to retract, being diſcarded by the man on whom he had beſtowed them, and whom he then immedi-

ately discovered not to have deserved them. Of this quarrel, which every day made more bitter, Lord Tyrconnel and Mr. Savage assigned very different reasons, which might perhaps all in reality concur, though they were not all convenient to be alleged by either party. Lord Tyrconnel affirmed that it was the constant practice of Mr. Savage to enter a tavern with any company that proposed it, drink the most expensive wines with great profusion, and when the reckoning was demanded to be without money: if, as it often happened, his company were willing to defray his part, the affair ended without any ill consequences; but if they were refractory, and expected that the wine should be paid for by him that drank it, his method of composition was, to take them with him to his own apartment, assume the government of the house, and order the butler, in an imperious manner, to set the best wine in the cellar before his company, who often drank till they forgot the respect due to the house in which they were entertained, indulged themselves in the utmost extravagance of merriment, practised the most licentious frolics, and committed all the outrages of drunkenness.

Nor was this the only charge which Lord Tyrconnel brought against him: having given him a collection of valuable books, stamped with his own arms, he had the mortification to see them in a short time exposed to sale upon the stalls, it being usual with

Mr. Savage, when he wanted a ſmall ſum, to take his books to the pawnbroker.

Whoever was acquainted with Mr. Savage eaſily credited both theſe accuſations: for having been obliged, from his firſt entrance into the world, to ſubſiſt upon expedients, affluence was not able to exalt him above them; and ſo much was he delighted with wine and converſation, and ſo long had he been accuſtomed to live by chance, that he would at any time go to the tavern without ſcruple, and truſt for his reckoning to the liberality of his company, and frequently of company to whom he was very little known. This conduct indeed very ſeldom drew upon him thoſe inconveniencies that might be feared by any other perſon; for his converſation was ſo entertaining, and his addreſs ſo pleaſing, that few thought the pleaſure which they received from him dearly purchaſed by paying for his wine. It was his peculiar happineſs that he ſcarcely ever found a ſtranger whom he did not leave a friend; but it muſt likewiſe be added, that he had not often a friend long without obliging him to become a ſtranger.

Mr. Savage, on the other hand, declared, that Lord Tyrconnel * quarrelled with him becauſe he would not ſubtract from his own luxury and extra-

* His expreſſion in one of his letters was, "That Lord T---l "had involved his eſtate, and therefore poorly ſought an oc- "caſion to quarrel with him."

vagance what he had promiſed to allow him, and that his reſentment was only a plea for the violation of his promiſe: he aſſerted that he had done nothing that ought to exclude him from that ſubſiſtence which he thought not ſo much a favour as a debt, ſince it was offered him upon conditions which he had never broken, and that his only fault was that he could not be ſupported with nothing.

He acknowledged that Lord Tyrconnel often exhorted him to regulate his method of life, and not to ſpend all his nights in taverns, and that he appeared very deſirous that he would paſs thoſe hours with him which he ſo freely beſtowed upon others. This demand Mr. Savage conſidered as a cenſure of his conduct, which he could never patiently bear, and which in the latter and cooler part of his life was ſo offenſive to him, that he declared it as his reſolution "to ſpurn "that friend who ſhould preſume to dictate to him;" and it is not likely that in his earlier years he received admonitions with more calmneſs.

He was likewiſe inclined to reſent ſuch expectations, as tending to infringe his liberty, of which he was very jealous, when it was neceſſary to the gratification of his paſſions, and declared that the requeſt was ſtill more unreaſonable, as the company to which he was to have been confined was unſupportably diſagreeable. This aſſertion affords another inſtance of that inconſiſtency of his writings with his converſa-

tion, which was ſo often to be obſerved. He forgot how laviſhly he had, in his Dedication to The Wanderer, extolled the delicacy and penetration, the humanity and generoſity, the candour and politeneſs, of the man whom, when he no longer loved him, he declared to be a wretch without underſtanding, without good nature, and without juſtice; of whoſe name he thought himſelf obliged to leave no trace in any future edition of his writings, and accordingly blotted it out of that copy of The Wanderer which was in his hands.

During his continuance with the Lord Tyrconnel he wrote The Triumph of Health and Mirth, on the recovery of Lady Tyrconnel from a languiſhing illneſs. This performance is remarkable not only for the gaiety of the ideas, and the melody of the numbers, but for the agreeable fiction upon which it is formed. Mirth, overwhelmed with ſorrow for the ſickneſs of her favourite, takes a flight in queſt of her ſiſter Health, whom ſhe finds reclined upon the brow of a lofty mountain, amidſt the fragrance of perpetual ſpring, with the breezes of the morning ſporting about her: being ſolicited by her ſiſter Mirth, ſhe readily promiſes her aſſiſtance, flies away in a cloud, and impregnates the waters of Bath with new virtues, by which the ſickneſs of Sapphira is relieved.

As the reputation of his abilities, the particular circumſtances of his birth and life, the ſplendour of

his appearance, and the diſtinction which was for ſome time paid him by Lord Tyrconnel, entitled him to familiarity with perſons of higher rank than thoſe to whoſe converſation he had been before admitted, he did not fail to gratify that curioſity which induced him to take a nearer view of thoſe whom their birth, their employments, or their fortunes, neceſſarily place at a diſtance from the greateſt part of mankind, and to examine whether their merit was magnified or diminiſhed by the medium through which it was contemplated; whether the ſplendour with which they dazzled their admirers was inherent in themſelves, or only reflected on them by the objects that ſurrounded them; and whether great men were ſelected for high ſtations, or high ſtations made great men.

For this purpoſe he took all opportunities of converſing familiarly with thoſe who were moſt conſpicuous at that time for their power or their influence; he watched their looſer moments, and examined their domeſtic behaviour with that acuteneſs which Nature had given him, and which the uncommon variety of his life had contributed to increaſe, and that inquiſitiveneſs which muſt always be produced in a vigorous mind, by an abſolute freedom from all preſſing or domeſtic engagements. His diſcernment was quick, and therefore he ſoon found in every perſon, and in every affair, ſomething that deſerved atten-

tion; he was ſupported by others without any care for himſelf, and was therefore at leiſure to purſue his obſervations.

More circumſtances to conſtitute a critic on human life could not eaſily concur, nor indeed could any man, who aſſumed from accidental advantages more praiſe than he could juſtly claim from his real merit, admit an acquaintance more dangerous than that of Savage, of whom likewiſe it muſt be confeſſed, that abilities really exalted above the common level, or virtue refined from paſſion, or proof againſt corruption, could not eaſily find an abler judge or a warmer advocate.

What was the reſult of Mr Savage's inquiry, though he was not much accuſtomed to conceal his diſcoveries, it may not be entirely ſafe to relate, becauſe the perſons whoſe characters he criticiſed are powerful, and power and reſentment are ſeldom ſtrangers; nor would it perhaps be wholly juſt, becauſe what he aſſerted in converſation might, though true in general, be heightened by ſome momentary ardour of imagination, and as it can be delivered only from memory, may be imperfectly repreſented; ſo that the picture at firſt aggravated, and then unſkilfully copied, may be juſtly ſuſpected to retain no great reſemblance of the original.

It may, however, be obſerved, that he did not appear to have formed very elevated ideas of thoſe to

whom the adminiſtration of affairs, or the conduct of parties, has been intruſted; who have been conſidered as the advocates of the Crown, or the guardians of the people, and who have obtained the moſt implicit confidence, and the loudeſt applauſes. Of one particular perſon, who has been at one time ſo popular as to be generally eſteemed, and at another ſo formidable as to be univerſally deteſted, he obſerved that his acquiſitions had been ſmall, or that his capacity was narrow, and that the whole range of his mind was from obſcenity to politics, and from politics to obſcenity.

But the opportunity of indulging his ſpeculations on great characters was now at an end. He was baniſhed from the table of Lord Tyrconnel, and turned again adrift upon the world, without proſpect of finding quickly any other harbour. As prudence was not one of the virtues by which he was diſtinguiſhed, he had made no proviſion againſt a misfortune like this. And though it is not to be imagined but that the ſeparation muſt for ſome time have been preceded by coldneſs, peeviſhneſs, or neglect, though it was undoubtedly the conſequence of accumulated provocations on both ſides, yet every one that knew Savage will readily believe, that to him it was ſudden as a ſtroke of thunder; that though he might have tranſiently ſuſpected it, he had never ſuffered any thought ſo unpleaſing to ſink into his mind, but that he had driven

it away by amuſements, or dreams of future felicity and affluence, and had never taken any meaſures by which he might prevent a precipitation from plenty to indigence.

This quarrel and ſeparation, and the difficulties to which Mr. Savage was expoſed by them, were ſoon known both to his friends and enemies; nor was it long before he perceived, from the behaviour of both, how much is added to the luſtre of genius by the ornaments of wealth.

His condition did not appear to excite much compaſſion, for he had not always been careful to uſe the advantages he enjoyed with that moderation which ought to have been with more than uſual caution preſerved by him, who knew, if he had reflected, that he was only a dependent on the bounty of another, whom he could expect to ſupport him no longer than he endeavoured to preſerve his favour, by complying with his inclinations, and whom he nevertheleſs ſet at defiance, and was continually irritating by negligence or encroachments.

Examples need not be ſought at any great diſtance to prove that ſuperiority of fortune has a natural tendency to kindle pride, and that pride ſeldom fails to exert itſelf in contempt and inſult; and if this is often the effect of hereditary wealth, and of honours enjoyed only by the merit of others, it is ſome extenuation of any indecent triumphs to which this unhappy

man may have been betrayed, that his proſperity was heightened by the force of novelty, and made more intoxicating by a ſenſe of the miſery in which he had ſo long languiſhed, and perhaps of the inſults which he had formerly borne, and which he might now think himſelf entitled to revenge. It is too common for thoſe who have unjuſtly ſuffered pain to inflict it likewiſe in their turn with the ſame injuſtice, and to imagine that they have a right to treat others as they have themſelves been treated.

That Mr. Savage was too much elevated by any good fortune is generally known; and ſome paſſages of his Introduction to The Author to be Let ſufficiently ſhew that he did not wholly refrain from ſuch ſatire as he afterwards thought very unjuſt when he was expoſed to it himſelf: for when he was afterwards ridiculed in the character of a diſtreſſed poet, he very eaſily diſcovered that diſtreſs was not a proper ſubject for merriment, or topic of invective. He was then able to diſcern that if miſery be the effect of virtue it ought to be reverenced; if of ill fortune, to be pitied; and if of vice, not to be inſulted; becauſe it is perhaps itſelf a puniſhment adequate to the crime by which it was produced. and the humanity of that man can deſerve no panegyric who is capable of reproaching a criminal in the hands of the executioner.

But theſe reflections, though they readily occurred to him in the firſt and laſt parts of his life, were, I am

afraid, for a long time forgotten; at leaſt they were, like many other maxims, treaſured up in his mind rather for ſhew than uſe, and operated very little upon his conduct, however elegantly he might ſometimes explain, or however forcibly he might inculcate, them.

His degradation, therefore, from the condition which he had enjoyed with ſuch wanton thoughtleſſneſs was conſidered by many as an occaſion of triumph. Thoſe who had before paid their court to him without ſucceſs, ſoon returned the contempt which they had ſuffered; and they who had received favours from him (for of ſuch favours as he could beſtow he was very liberal) did not always remember them. So much more certain are the effects of reſentment than of gratitude: it is not only to many more pleaſing to recollect thoſe faults which place others below them, than thoſe virtues by which they are themſelves comparatively depreſſed, but it is likewiſe more eaſy to neglect than to recompenſe; and though there are few who will practiſe a laborious virtue, there will never be wanting multitudes that will indulge an eaſy vice.

Savage, however, was very little diſturbed at the marks of contempt which his ill fortune brought upon him from thoſe whom he never eſteemed, and with whom he never conſidered himſelf as levelled by any calamities; and though it was not without ſome un-

eaſineſs that he ſaw ſome, whoſe friendſhip he valued, change their behaviour, he yet obſerved their coldneſs without much emotion, conſidered them as the ſlaves of Fortune and the worſhippers of Proſperity, and was more inclined to deſpiſe them than to lament himſelf.

It does not appear that after this return of his wants he found mankind equally favourable to him as at his firſt appearance in the world. His ſtory, though in reality not leſs melancholy, was leſs affecting, becauſe it was no longer new; it therefore procured no new friends, and thoſe that had formerly relieved him thought they might now conſign him to others. He was now likewiſe conſidered by many rather as criminal than as unhappy; for the friends of Lord Tyrconnel and of his mother were ſufficiently induſtrious to publiſh his weakneſſes, which were indeed very numerous, and nothing was forgotten that might make him either hateful or ridiculous.

It cannot but be imagined that ſuch repreſentations of his faults muſt make great numbers leſs ſenſible of his diſtreſs; many who had only an opportunity to hear one part, made no ſcruple to propagate the account which they received; many aſſiſted their circulation from malice or revenge, and perhaps many pretended to credit them, that they might with a better grace withdraw their regard or with-hold their aſſiſtance.

Savage, however, was not one of thoſe who ſuffered himſelf to be injured without reſiſtance, nor was leſs diligent in expoſing the faults of Lord Tyrconnel, over whom he obtained at leaſt this advantage, that he drove him firſt to the practice of outrage and violence; for he was ſo much provoked by the wit and virulence of Savage, that he came with a number of attendants that did no honour to his courage to beat him at a coffeehouſe: but it happened that he had left the place a few minutes, and his Lordſhip had, without danger, the pleaſure of boaſting how he would have treated him. Mr. Savage went next day to repay his viſit at his own houſe, but was prevailed on by his domeſtics to retire without inſiſting upon ſeeing him.

Lord Tyrconnel was accuſed by Mr. Savage of ſome actions which ſcarcely any provocations will be thought ſufficient to juſtify, ſuch as ſeizing what he had in his lodgings, and other inſtances of wanton cruelty, by which he increaſed the diſtreſs of Savage without any advantage to himſelf.

Theſe mutual accuſations were retorted on both ſides for many years with the utmoſt degree of virulence and rage, and time ſeemed rather to augment than diminiſh their reſentment. That the anger of Mr. Savage ſhould be kept alive is not ſtrange, becauſe he felt every day the conſequences of the quarrel; but it might reaſonably have been hoped that Lord Tyrconnel might have relented, and at length

have forgot thoſe provocations which, however they might have once inflamed him, had not in reality much hurt him.

The ſpirit of Mr. Savage, indeed, never ſuffered him to ſolicit a reconciliation; he returned reproach for reproach, and inſult for inſult: his ſuperiority of wit ſupplied the diſadvantages of his fortune, and enabled him to form a party, and prejudice great numbers in his favour.

But though this might be ſome gratification of his vanity, it afforded very little relief to his neceſſities, and he was very frequently reduced to uncommon hardſhips, of which, however, he never made any mean or importunate complaints, being formed rather to bear miſery with fortitude, than enjoy proſperity with moderation.

He now thought himſelf again at liberty to expoſe the cruelty of his mother, and therefore, I believe, about this time publiſhed The Baſtard, a poem remarkable for the vivacious ſallies of thought in the beginning, where he makes a pompous enumeration of the imaginary advantages of baſe birth, and the pathetic ſentiments at the end, where he recounts the real calamities which he ſuffered by the crime of his parents.

The vigour and ſpirit of the verſes, the peculiar circumſtances of the author, the novelty of the ſubject, and the notoriety of the ſtory to which the al-

luſions are made, procured this performance a very favourable reception; great numbers were immediately diſperſed, and editions were multiplied with unuſual rapidity.

One circumſtance attended the publication which Savage uſed to relate with great ſatisfaction. His mother, to whom the poem was, with "due reve-"rence," inſcribed, happened then to be at Bath, where ſhe could not conveniently retire from cenſure, or conceal herſelf from obſervation; and no ſooner did the reputation of the poem begin to ſpread than ſhe heard it repeated in all places of concourſe, nor could ſhe enter the aſſembly-rooms, or croſs the walks, without being ſaluted with ſome lines from The Baſtard.

This was perhaps the firſt time that ever ſhe diſcovered a ſenſe of ſhame, and on this occaſion the power of wit was very conſpicuous; the wretch who had, without ſcruple, proclaimed herſelf an adultereſs, and who had firſt endeavoured to ſtarve her ſon, then to tranſport him, and afterwards to hang him, was not able to bear the repreſentation of her own conduct, but fled from reproach; though ſhe felt no pain from guilt, and left Bath with the utmoſt haſte to ſhelter herſelf among the crowds of London.

Thus Savage had the ſatisfaction of finding, that though he could not reform his mother he could puniſh her, and that he did not always ſuffer alone.

The pleaſure which he received from this increaſe of his poetical reputation was ſufficient, for ſome time, to overbalance the miſeries of want, which this performance did not much alleviate, for it was ſold for a very trivial ſum to a bookſeller, who, though the ſucceſs was ſo uncommon that five impreſſions were ſold, of which ſome were undoubtedly very numerous, had not generoſity ſufficient to admit the unhappy writer to any part of the profit.

The ſale of this poem was always mentioned by Savage with the utmoſt elevation of heart, and referred to by him as an inconteſtable proof of a general acknowledgment of his abilities. It was indeed the only production of which he could juſtly boaſt a general reception.

But though he did not loſe the opportunity which ſucceſs gave him of ſetting a high rate on his abilities, but paid due deference to the ſuffrages of mankind when they were given in his favour, he did not ſuffer his eſteem of himſelf to depend upon others, nor found any thing ſacred in the voice of the people when they were inclined to cenſure him; he then readily ſhewed the folly of expecting that the public ſhould judge right, obſerved how ſlowly poetical merit had often forced its way into the world; he contented himſelf with the applauſe of men of judgment, and was ſomewhat diſpoſed to exclude all thoſe from the character of men of judgment who did not applaud him.

But he was at other times more favourable to mankind than to think them blind to the beauties of his Works, and imputed the slowness of their sale to other causes; either they were published at a time when the Town was empty, or when the attention of the public was engrossed by some struggle in the parliament, or some other object of general concern; or they were by the neglect of the publisher not diligently dispersed, or by his avarice not advertised with sufficient frequency. Address, or industry, or liberality, was always wanting; and the blame was laid rather on any other person than the author.

By arts like these, arts which every man practises in some degree, and to which too much of the little tranquillity of life is to be ascribed, Savage was always able to live at peace with himself. Had he indeed only made use of these expedients to alleviate the loss or want of fortune or reputation, or any other advantages which it is not in man's power to bestow upon himself, they might have been justly mentioned as instances of a philosophical mind, and very properly proposed to the imitation of multitudes who, for want of diverting their imaginations with the same dexterity, languish under afflictions which might be easily removed.

It were, doubtless, to be wished that truth and reason were universally prevalent, that every thing were esteemed according to its real value, and that men

would ſecure themſelves from being diſappointed in their endeavours after happineſs, by placing it only in virtue, which is always to be obtained; but if adventitious and foreign pleaſures muſt be purſued, it would be perhaps of ſome benefit, ſince that purſuit muſt frequently be fruitleſs, if the practice of Savage could be taught, that folly might be an antidote to folly, and one fallacy be obviated by another.

But the danger of this pleaſing intoxication muſt not be concealed, nor indeed can any one, after having obſerved the life of Savage, need to be cautioned againſt it. By imputing none of his miſeries to himſelf, he continued to act upon the ſame principles, and to follow the ſame path; was never made wiſer by his ſufferings, nor preſerved by one misfortune from falling into another. He proceeded throughout his life to tread the ſame ſteps on the ſame circle; always applauding his paſt conduct, or at leaſt forgetting it, to amuſe himſelf with phantoms of happineſs which were dancing before him, and willingly turned his eyes from the light of reaſon, when it would have diſcovered the illuſion, and ſhewn him, what he never wiſhed to ſee, his real ſtate.

He is even accuſed, after having lulled his imagination with thoſe ideal opiates, of having tried the ſame experiment upon his conſcience; and having accuſtomed himſelf to impute all deviations from the right to foreign cauſes, it is certain that he was upon

every occaſion too eaſily reconciled to himſelf, and that he appeared very little to regret thoſe practices which had impaired his reputation. The reigning error of his life was, that he miſtook the love for the practice of virtue, and was indeed not ſo much a good man as the friend of goodneſs.

This at leaſt muſt be allowed him, that he always preſerved a ſtrong ſenſe of the dignity, the beauty, and the neceſſity, of virtue, and that he never contributed deliberately to ſpread corruption among mankind; his actions, which were generally precipitate, were often blameable; but his Writings, being the productions of ſtudy, uniformly tended to the exaltation of the mind, and the propagation of morality and piety.

Theſe Writings may improve mankind when his failings ſhall be forgotten, and therefore he muſt be conſidered, upon the whole, as a benefactor to the world; nor can his perſonal example do any hurt, ſince whoever hears of his faults will hear of the miſeries which they brought upon him, and which would deſerve leſs pity, had not his condition been ſuch as made his faults pardonable. He may be conſidered as a child expoſed to all the temptations of indigence at an age when reſolution was not yet ſtrengthened by conviction, nor virtue confirmed by habit; a circumſtance which, in his Baſtard, he laments in a very affecting manner;

——— No Mother's care
Shielded my infant innocence with prayer;
No Father's guardian hand my youth maintain'd,
Call'd forth my virtues, or from vice reſtrain'd.

The Baſtard, however it might provoke or mortify his mother, could not be expected to melt her to compaſſion, ſo that he was ſtill under the ſame want of the neceſſaries of life, and he therefore exerted all the intereſt which his wit, or his birth, or his misfortunes, could procure, to obtain, upon the death of Euſden, the place of Poet Laureat, and proſecuted his application with ſo much diligence, that the King publicly declared it his intention to beſtow it upon him; but ſuch was the fate of Savage, that even the King, when he intended his advantage, was diſappointed in his ſchemes; for the Lord Chamberlain, who has the diſpoſal of the laurel, as one of the appendages of his office, either did not know the King's deſign, or did not approve it, or thought the nomination of the Laureat an encroachment upon his rights, and therefore beſtowed the laurel upon Colley Cibber.

Mr. Savage, thus diſappointed, took a reſolution of applying to the Queen, that having once given him life, ſhe would enable him to ſupport it, and therefore publiſhed a ſhort poem on her birth-day, to which he gave the odd title of Volunteer Laureat. The event of this eſſay he has himſelf related in the following letter, which he prefixed to the poem,

when he afterwards reprinted it in The Gentleman's Magazine, from whence I have copied it entire, as this was one of the few attempts in which Mr. Savage ſucceeded.

" MR. URBAN,

" In your Magazine for February you publiſhed " the laſt Volunteer Laureat, written on a very me- " lancholy occaſion, the death of the royal patroneſs " of arts and literature in general, and of the author " of that poem in particular. I now ſend you the firſt " that Mr. Savage wrote under that title.—This " gentleman, notwithſtanding a very conſiderable in- " tereſt, being, on the death of Mr. Euſden, diſap- " pointed of the Laureat's place, wrote the before- " mentioned poem, which were no ſooner publiſhed " but the late Queen ſent to a bookſeller for them. " The author had not at that time a friend either to " get him introduced, or his poem preſented, at court; " yet ſuch was the unſpeakable goodneſs of that Prin- " ceſs, that, notwithſtanding this act of ceremony " was wanting, in a few days after publication Mr. " Savage received a bank-bill of fifty pounds, and a " gracious meſſage from her Majeſty, by the Lord " North and Guildford, to this effect, " That her " Majeſty was highly pleaſed with the verſes; that " ſhe took particularly kind his lines there relating " to the King; that he had permiſſion to write an- " nually on the ſame ſubject; and that he ſhould

"yearly receive the like preſent, till ſomething bet-
"ter (which was her Majeſty's intention) could be
"done for him." After this he was permitted to
"preſent one of his annual poems to her Majeſty,
"had the honour of kiſſing her hand, and met with
"the moſt gracious reception. Your's," &c.

Such was the performance, and ſuch its reception; a reception which, though by no means unkind, was yet not in the higheſt degree generous: to chain down the genius of a writer to an annual panegyric ſhewed in the Queen too much deſire of hearing her own praiſes, and a greater regard to herſelf than to him on whom her bounty was conferred: it was a kind of avaricious generoſity, by which flattery was rather purchaſed than genius rewarded.

Mrs. Oldfield had formerly given him the ſame allowance with much more heroic intention; ſhe had no other view than to enable him to proſecute his ſtudies, and to ſet himſelf above the want of aſſiſtance, and was contented with doing good without ſtipulating for encomiums.

Mr. Savage, however, was not at liberty to make exceptions, but was raviſhed with the favours which he had received, and probably yet more with thoſe which he was promiſed; he conſidered himſelf now as a favourite of the Queen, and did not doubt but a few annual poems would eſtabliſh him in ſome profitable employment.

He therefore aſſumed the title of Volunteer Laureat, not without ſome reprehenſions from Cibber, who informed him that the title of Laureat was a mark of honour conferred by the King, from whom all honour is derived, and which therefore no man has a right to beſtow upon himſelf; and added, that he might with equal propriety ſtyle himſelf a Volunteer Lord, or Volunteer Baronet. It cannot be denied that the remark was juſt; but Savage did not think any title which was conferred upon Mr. Cibber ſo honourable as that the uſurpation of it could be imputed to him as an inſtance of very exorbitant vanity, and therefore continued to write under the ſame title, and received every year the ſame reward.

He did not appear to conſider theſe encomiums as teſts of his abilities, or as any thing more than annual hints to the Queen of her promiſe, or acts of ceremony, by the performance of which he was entitled to his penſion, and therefore did not labour them with great diligence, or print more than fifty each year, except that for ſome of the laſt years he regularly inſerted them in The Gentleman's Magazine, by which they were diſperſed over the kingdom.

Of ſome of them he had himſelf ſo low an opinion, that he intended to omit them in the collection of poems for which he printed propoſals, and ſolicited ſubſcriptions; nor can it ſeem ſtrange that, being confined to the ſame ſubject, he ſhould be at ſome times

indolent, and at others unſucceſsful; that he ſhould ſometimes delay a diſagreeable taſk till it was too late to perform it well; or that he ſhould ſometimes repeat the ſame ſentiment on the ſame occaſion, or at others be miſled, by an attempt after novelty, to forced conceptions and far-fetched images.

He wrote, indeed, with a double intention, which ſupplied him with ſome variety; for his buſineſs was to praiſe the Queen for the favours which he had received, and to complain to her of the delay of thoſe which ſhe had promiſed; in ſome of his pieces, therefore, gratitude is predominant, and in ſome diſcontent; in ſome he repreſents himſelf as happy in her patronage, and in others as diſconſolate to find himſelf neglected.

Her promiſe, like other promiſes made to this unfortunate man, was never performed, though he took ſufficient care that it ſhould not be forgotten. The publication of his Volunteer Laureat procured him no other reward than a regular remittance of fifty pounds.

He was not ſo depreſſed by his diſappointments as to neglect any opportunity that was offered of advancing his intereſt. When the Princeſs Anne was married, he wrote a poem upon her departure, only, as he declared, "becauſe it was expected from him," and he was not willing to bar his own proſpects by any appearance of neglect.

He never mentioned any advantage gained by this poem, or any regard that was paid to it, and therefore it is likely that it was conſidered at court as an act of duty to which he was obliged by his dependence, and which it was therefore not neceſſary to reward by any new favour; or perhaps the Queen really intended his advancement, and therefore thought it ſuperfluous to laviſh preſents upon a man whom ſhe intended to eſtabliſh for life.

About this time not only his hopes were in danger of being fruſtrated but his penſion likewiſe of being obſtructed by an accidental calumny. The writer of The Daily Courant, a paper then publiſhed under the direction of the Miniſtry, charged him with a crime which, though not very great in itſelf, would have been remarkably invidious in him, and might very juſtly have incenſed the Queen againſt him. He was accuſed, by name, of influencing elections againſt the Court, by appearing at the head of a Tory mob; nor did the accuſer fail to aggravate his crime, by repreſenting it as the effect of the moſt atrocious ingratitude, and a kind of a rebellion againſt the Queen, who had firſt preſerved him from an infamous death, and afterwards diſtinguiſhed him by her favour, and ſupported him by her charity. The charge, as it was open and confident, was likewiſe by good fortune very particular: the place of the tranſaction was mentioned, and the whole ſeries of the rioter's conduct

related. This exactneſs made Mr. Savage's vindication eaſy; for he never had in his life ſeen the place which was declared to be the ſcene of his wickedneſs, nor ever had been preſent in any town when its repreſentatives were choſen. This anſwer he therefore made haſte to publiſh, with all the circumſtances neceſſary to make it credible, and very reaſonably demanded that the accuſation ſhould be retracted in the ſame paper, that he might no longer ſuffer the imputation of ſedition and ingratitude. This demand was likewiſe preſſed by him in a private letter to the author of the paper, who, either truſting to the protection of thoſe whoſe defence he had undertaken, or having entertained ſome perſonal malice againſt Mr. Savage, or fearing leſt, by retracting ſo confident an aſſertion, he ſhould impair the credit of his paper, refuſed to give him that ſatisfaction.

Mr. Savage therefore thought it neceſſary to his own vindication to proſecute him in the King's Bench; but as he did not find any ill effects from the accuſation, having ſufficiently cleared his innocence, he thought any farther procedure would have the appearance of revenge, and therefore willingly dropped it.

He ſaw, ſoon afterwards, a proceſs commenced in the ſame court againſt himſelf, on an information, in which he was accuſed of writing and publiſhing an obſcene pamphlet.

It was always Mr. Savage's deſire to be diſtinguiſhed, and when any controverſy became popular, he never wanted ſome reaſon for engaging in it with great ardour, and appearing at the head of the party which he had choſen. As he was never celebrated for his prudence, he had no ſooner taken his ſide, and informed himſelf of the chief topics of the diſpute, than he took all opportunities of aſſerting and propagating his principles, without much regard to his own intereſt, or any other viſible deſign than that of drawing upon himſelf the attention of mankind.

The diſpute between the Biſhop of London and the Chancellor is well known to have been for ſome time the chief topic of political converſation, and therefore Mr. Savage, in purſuance of his character, endeavoured to become conſpicuous among the controvertiſts with which every coffeehouſe was filled on that occaſion. He was an indefatigable oppoſer of all the claims of eccleſiaſtical power, though he did not know on what they were founded, and was therefore no friend to the Biſhop of London. But he had another reaſon for appearing as a warm advocate for Dr. Rundle, for he was the friend of Mr. Foſter and Mr. Thomſon, who were the friends of Mr. Savage.

Thus remote was his intereſt in the queſtion, which, however, as he imagined, concerned him ſo nearly, that it was not ſufficient to harangue and diſpute, but neceſſary likewiſe to write upon it.

He therefore engaged with great ardour in a new poem, called by him The Progreſs of a Divine, in which he conducts a profligate prieſt, by all the gradations of wickedneſs, from a poor curacy in the country to the higheſt preferments of the church, and deſcribes, with that humour which was natural to him, and that knowledge which was extended to all the diverſities of human life, his behaviour in every ſtation, and inſinuates that this prieſt, thus accompliſhed, found at laſt a patron in the Biſhop of London.

When he was aſked, by one of his friends, on what pretence he could charge the Biſhop with ſuch an action, he had no more to ſay than that he had only inverted the accuſation, and that he thought it reaſonable to believe that he who obſtructed the riſe of a good man without reaſon, would for bad reaſons promote the exaltation of a villain.

The clergy were univerſally provoked by this ſatire, and Savage, who, as was his conſtant practice, had ſet his name to his performance, was cenſured in The Weekly Miſcellany * with ſeverity, which he did not ſeem inclined to forget.

* A ſhort ſatire was likewiſe publiſhed, in the ſame paper, in which were the following lines;

For cruel murder doom'd to hempen death
Savage, by royal grace, prolong'd his breath.
Well might you think he ſpent his future years
In pray'r and faſting, and repentant tears.
----But, O vain hope!----The truly Savage cries,
" Prieſts and their ſlaviſh doctrines I deſpiſe.
" Shall I----------

But a return of invective was not thought a ſufficient puniſhment: the Court of King's Bench was therefore moved againſt him, and he was obliged to return an anſwer to a charge of obſcenity. It was urged, in his defence, that obſcenity was criminal when it was intended to promote the practice of vice, but

" Who, by free thinking to free action fir'd,
" In midnight brawls a deathleſs name acquir'd,
" Now ſtoop to learn of eccleſiaſtic men?------
"----No, arm'd with rhyme, at prieſts I 'll take my aim,
" Tho' Prudence bids me murder but their fame.

*Weekly Miſcellany.*

An anſwer was publiſhed in The Gentleman's Magazine, written by an unknown hand, from which the following lines are ſelected;

Tranſorm'd by thoughtleſs rage and midnight wine,
From malice free, and puſh'd without deſign,
In cruel brawl if Savage lung'd a thruſt,
And brought the youth a victim to the duſt,
So ſtrong the hand of Accident appears,
The royal hand from guilt and vengeance clears.
Inſtead of waſting " all thy future years,
" Savage! in pray'r and vain repentant tears,"
Exert thy pen to mend a vicious age,
To curb the prieſt, and ſink his high-church rage;
To ſhew what frauds the holy veſtments hide,
The nefts of av'rice, luſt, and pedant pride;
Then change the ſcene, let merit brightly ſhine,
And round the patriot twiſt the wreath divine;
The heav'nly guide deliver down to fame;
In well-tun'd lays tranſmit a Foſter's name:
Touch ev'ry paſſion with harmonious art,
Exalt the genius, and correct the heart.
Thus future times ſhall royal grace extol;
Thus poliſh'd lines thy preſent fame enrol.
----But grant---------
---Maliciouſly that Savage plung'd the ſteel,
And made the youth its ſhining vengeance feel,
My ſoul abhors the act the man deteſts,
But more the bigotry in prieſtly breaſts.

*Gentleman's Magazine*, May 1735.

that Mr. Savage had only introduced obſcene ideas with the view of expoſing them to deteſtation, and of amending the age, by ſhewing the deformity of wickedneſs. This plea was admitted, and Sir Philip Yorke, who then preſided in that court, diſmiſſed the information with encomiums upon the purity and excellence of Mr. Savage's Writings.

The proſecution, however, anſwered, in ſome meaſure, the purpoſe of thoſe by whom it was ſet on foot; for Mr. Savage was ſo far intimidated by it, that when the edition of his poem was ſold he did not venture to reprint it; ſo that it was in a ſhort time forgotten, or forgotten by all but thoſe whom it offended.

It is ſaid that ſome endeavours were uſed to incenſe the Queen againſt him, but he found advocates to obviate at leaſt part of their effect; for though he was never advanced he ſtill continued to receive his penſion.

This poem drew more infamy upon him than any incident of his life; and as his conduct cannot be vindicated, it is proper to ſecure his memory from reproach, by informing thoſe whom he made his enemies that he never intended to repeat the provocation; and that, though whenever he thought he had any reaſon to complain of the clergy he uſed to threaten them with a new edition of The Progreſs of a Divine, it was his calm and ſettled reſolution to ſuppreſs it for ever.

He once intended to have made a better reparation for the folly or injuſtice with which he might be charged, by writing another poem called The Progreſs of a Freethinker, whom he intended to lead through all the ſtages of vice and folly, to convert him from virtue to wickedneſs, and from religion to infidelity, by all the modiſh ſophiſtry uſed for that purpoſe, and at laſt to diſmiſs him by his own hand into the other world.

That he did not execute this deſign is a real loſs to mankind; for he was too well acquainted with all the ſcenes of debauchery to have failed in his repreſentations of them, and too zealous for virtue not to have repreſented them in ſuch a manner as ſhould expoſe them either to ridicule or deteſtation.

But this plan was, like others, formed and laid aſide till the vigour of his imagination was ſpent, and the effervеſcence of invention had ſubſided, but ſoon gave way to ſome other deſign which pleaſed by its novelty for a while, and then was neglected like the former.

He was ſtill in his uſual exigencies, having no certain ſupport but the penſion allowed him by the Queen, which, though it might have kept an exact economiſt from want, was very far from being ſufficient for Mr. Savage, who had never been accuſtomed to diſmiſs any of his appetites without the gratification which they ſolicited, and whom nothing but

want of money with-held from partaking of every pleaſure that fell within his view.

His conduct with regard to his penſion was very particular: no ſooner had he changed the bill than he vaniſhed from the ſight of all his acquaintances, and lay for ſome time out of the reach of all the inquiries that Friendſhip or Curioſity could make after him; at length he appeared again pennyleſs as before, but never informed even thoſe whom he ſeemed to regard moſt where he had been, nor was his retreat ever diſcovered.

This was his conſtant practice during the whole time that he received the penſion from the Queen: he regularly diſappeared and returned. He indeed affirmed that he retired to ſtudy, and that the money ſupported him in ſolitude for many months; but his friends declared that the ſhort time in which it was ſpent ſufficiently confuted his own account of his conduct.

His politeneſs and his wit ſtill raiſed him friends, who were deſirous of ſetting him at length free from that indigence by which he had been hitherto oppreſſed, and therefore ſolicited Sir Robert Walpole in his favour with ſo much earneſtneſs, that they obtained a promiſe of the next place that ſhould become vacant, not exceeding two hundred pounds a-year. This promiſe was made with an uncommon declaration, "that it was not the promiſe of a miniſter to a "petitioner, but of a friend to his friend."

Mr. Savage now concluded himſelf ſet at eaſe for ever, and, as he obſerves in a poem written on that incident of his life, truſted and was truſted, but ſoon found that his confidence was ill-grounded, and this friendly promiſe was not inviolable. He ſpent a long time in ſolicitations, and at laſt deſpaired and deſiſted.

He did not indeed deny that he had given the miniſter ſome reaſon to believe that he ſhould not ſtrengthen his own intereſt by advancing him, for he had taken care to diſtinguiſh himſelf in coffeehouſes as an advocate for the miniſtry of the laſt years of Queen Anne, and was always ready to juſtify the conduct, and exalt the character, of Lord Bolingbroke, whom he mentions with great regard in an epiſtle upon authors, which he wrote about that time, but was too wiſe to publiſh, and of which only ſome fragments have appeared, inſerted by him in the Magazine after his retirement.

To deſpair was not, however, the character of Savage: when one patronage failed he had recourſe to another. The Prince was now extremely popular, and had very liberally rewarded the merit of ſome writers whom Mr. Savage did not think ſuperior to himſelf, and therefore he reſolved to addreſs a poem to him.

For this purpoſe he made choice of a ſubject which could regard only perſons of the higheſt rank and greateſt affluence, and which was therefore proper for

a poem intended to procure the patronage of a prince; and having retired for ſome time to Richmond, that he might proſecute his deſign in full tranquillity, without the temptations of pleaſure or the ſolicitations of creditors, by which his meditations were in equal danger of being diſconcerted, he produced a poem on Public Spirit with regard to Public Works.

The plan of this poem is very extenſive, and compriſes a multitude of topics, each of which might furniſh matter ſufficient for a long performance, and of which ſome have already employed more eminent writers; but as he was perhaps not fully acquainted with the whole extent of his own deſign, and was writing to obtain a ſupply of wants too preſſing to admit of long or accurate inquiries, he paſſes negligently over many public works which, even in his own opinion, deſerved to be more elaborately treated.

But though he may ſometimes diſappoint his reader by tranſient touches upon theſe ſubjects, which have often been conſidered, and therefore naturally raiſe expectations, he muſt be allowed amply to compenſate his omiſſions, by expatiating in the concluſion of his work upon a kind of beneficence not yet celebrated by any eminent poet, though it now appears more ſuſceptible of embelliſhments, more adapted to exalt the ideas, and affect the paſſions, than many of thoſe which have hitherto been thought moſt worthy of the ornaments of verſe. The ſettlement of colonies

in uninhabited countries, the eſtabliſhment of thoſe in ſecurity whoſe misfortunes have made their own country no longer pleaſing or ſafe, the acquiſition of property without injury to any, the appropriation of the waſte and luxuriant bounties of Nature, and the enjoyment of thoſe gifts which Heaven has ſcattered upon regions uncultivated and unoccupied, cannot be conſidered without giving riſe to a great number of pleaſing ideas, and bewildering the imagination in delightful proſpects; and therefore whatever ſpeculations they may produce in thoſe who have confined themſelves to political ſtudies, naturally fixed the attention and excited the applauſe of a poet. The politician, when he conſiders men driven into other countries for ſhelter, and obliged to retire to foreſts and deſerts, and paſs their lives and fix their poſterity in the remoteſt corners of the world, to avoid thoſe hardſhips which they ſuffer or fear in their native place, may very properly inquire why the legiſlature does not provide a remedy for theſe miſeries, rather than encourage an eſcape from them. He may conclude that the flight of every honeſt man is a loſs to the community, that thoſe who are unhappy without guilt ought to be relieved, and the life which is overburthened by accidental calamities ſet at eaſe by the care of the public; and that thoſe who have, by miſconduct, forfeited their claim to favour, ought rather to be made uſeful to the ſociety which they have in-

jured than be driven from it. But the poet is employed in a more pleaſing undertaking than that of propoſing laws which, however juſt or expedient, will never be made, or endeavouring to reduce to rational ſchemes of government ſocieties which were formed by chance, and are conducted by the private paſſions of thoſe who preſide in them. He guides the unhappy fugitive from want and perſecution to plenty, quiet, and ſecurity, and ſeats him in ſcenes of peaceful ſolitude and undiſturbed repoſe.

Savage has not forgotten, amidſt the pleaſing ſentiments which this proſpect of retirement ſuggeſted to him, to cenſure thoſe crimes which have been generally committed by the diſcoverers of new regions, and to expoſe the enormous wickedneſs of making war upon barbarous nations becauſe they cannot reſiſt, and of invading countries becauſe they are fruitful; of extending navigation only to propagate vice, and of viſiting diſtant lands only to lay them waſte. He has aſſerted the natural equality of mankind, and endeavoured to ſuppreſs that pride which inclines men to imagine that right is the conſequence of power.

His deſcription of the various miſeries which force men to ſeek for refuge in diſtant countries affords another inſtance of his proficiency in the important and extenſive ſtudy of human life; and the tenderneſs with which he recounts them another proof of his humanity and benevolence.

It is obſervable that the cloſe of this poem diſcovers a change which experience had made in Mr. Savage's opinions. In a poem written by him in his youth, and publiſhed in his Miſcellanies, he declares his contempt of the contracted views and narrow proſpects of the middle ſtate of life, and declares his reſolution either to tower like the cedar, or be trampled like the ſhrub; but in this poem, though addreſſed to a prince, he mentions this ſtate of life as compriſing thoſe who ought moſt to attract reward, thoſe who merit moſt the confidence of power and the familiarity of greatneſs; and, accidentally mentioning this paſſage to one of his friends, declared, that in his opinion all the virtue of mankind was comprehended in that ſtate.

In deſcribing villas and gardens he did not omit to condemn that abſurd cuſtom which prevails among the Engliſh of permitting ſervants to receive money from ſtrangers for the entertainment that they receive, and therefore inſerted in his poem theſe lines:

> But what the flow'ring pride of gardens rare,
> However royal, or however fair,
> If gates, which to acceſs ſhould ſtill give way,
> Ope but, like Peter's Paradiſe, for pay?
> If perquiſited varlets frequent ſtand,
> And each new walk muſt a new tax demand?
> What foreign eye but with contempt ſurveys?
> What Muſe ſhall from oblivion ſnatch their praiſe?

But before the publication of his performance he recollected that the Queen allowed her garden and

cave at Richmond to be ſhewn for money, and that ſhe ſo openly countenanced the practice, that ſhe had beſtowed the privilege of ſhewing them as a place of profit on a man whoſe merit ſhe valued herſelf upon rewarding, though ſhe gave him only the liberty of diſgracing his country.

He therefore thought, with more prudence than was often exerted by him, that the publication of theſe lines might be officiouſly repreſented as an inſult upon the Queen, to whom he owed his life and his ſubſiſtence, and that the propriety of his obſervation would be no ſecurity againſt the cenſures which the unſeaſonableneſs of it might draw upon him; he therefore ſuppreſſed the paſſage in the firſt edition, but after the Queen's death thought the ſame caution no longer neceſſary, and reſtored it to the proper place.

The poem was therefore publiſhed without any political faults, and inſcribed to the Prince: but Mr. Savage, having no friend upon whom he could prevail to preſent it to him, had no other method of attracting his obſervation than the publication of frequent advertiſements, and therefore received no reward from his patron, however generous on other occaſions.

This diſappointment he never mentioned without indignation, being by ſome means or other confident that the Prince was not ignorant of his addreſs to him, and inſinuated, that if any advances in popularity

could have been made by diſtinguiſhing him, he had not written without notice or without reward.

He was once inclined to have preſented his poem in perſon, and ſent to the printer for a copy with that deſign; but either his opinion changed or his reſolution deſerted him, and he continued to reſent neglect without attempting to force himſelf into regard.

Nor was the public much more favourable than his patron, for only ſeventy-two were ſold, though the performance was much commended by ſome whoſe judgment in that kind of writing is generally allowed. But Savage eaſily reconciled himſelf to mankind without imputing any defect to his work, by obſerving that his poem was unluckily publiſhed two days after the prorogation of the parliament, and by conſequence at a time when all thoſe who could be expected to regard it were in the hurry of preparing for their departure, or engaged in taking leave of others upon their diſmiſſion from public affairs.

It muſt be, however, allowed, in juſtification of the public, that this performance is not the moſt excellent of Mr. Savage's works; and that though it cannot be denied to contain many ſtriking ſentiments, majeſtic lines, and juſt obſervations, it is in general not ſufficiently poliſhed in the language, or enlivened in the imagery, or digeſted in the plan.

Thus his poem contributed nothing to the alleviation of his poverty, which was ſuch as very few could

have ſupported with equal patience, but to which it muſt likewiſe be confeſſed that few would have been expoſed who received punctually fifty pounds a-year; a ſalary which, though by no means equal to the demands of vanity and luxury, is yet found ſufficient to ſupport families above want, and was undoubtedly more than the neceſſities of life require.

But no ſooner had he received his penſion than he withdrew to his darling privacy, from which he returned in a ſhort time to his former diſtreſs; and for ſome part of the year generally lived by chance, eating only when he was invited to the tables of his acquaintantes, from which the meanneſs of his dreſs often excluded him, when the politeneſs and variety of his converſation would have been thought a ſufficient recompenſe for his entertainment.

He lodged as much by accident as he dined, and paſſed the night ſometimes in mean houſes which are ſet open at night to any caſual wanderers, ſometimes in cellars among the riot and filth of the meaneſt and moſt profligate of the rabble; and ſometimes, when he had not money to ſupport even the expenſes of theſe receptacles, walked about the ſtreets till he was weary, and lay down in the ſummer upon a bulk, or in the winter, with his aſſociates in poverty, among the aſhes of a glaſshouſe.

In this manner were paſſed thoſe days and thoſe nights which Nature had enabled him to have em-

ployed in elevated ſpeculations, uſeful ſtudies, or pleaſing converſation. On a bulk, in a cellar, or in a glaſs-houſe, among thieves and beggars, was to be found the Author of The Wanderer, the man of exalted ſentiments, extenſive views, and curious obſervations! the man whoſe remarks on life might have aſſiſted the ſtateſman, whoſe ideas of virtue might have enlightened the moraliſt, whoſe eloquence might have influenced ſenates, and whoſe delicacy might have poliſhed courts!

It cannot but be imagined that ſuch neceſſities might ſometimes force him upon diſreputable practices, and it is probable that theſe lines in The Wanderer were occaſioned by his reflections on his own conduct.

> Tho' mis'ry leads to happineſs and truth,
> Unequal to the load, this languid youth,
> (O let none cenſure if, untry'd by grief,
> If amidſt woe, untempted by relief)
> He ſtoop'd reluctant to low arts of ſhame,
> Which then, ev'n then, he ſcorn'd, and bluſh'd to name.

Whoever was acquainted with him was certain to be ſolicited for ſmall ſums, which the frequency of the requeſt made in time conſiderable, and he was therefore quickly ſhunned by thoſe who were become familiar enough to be truſted with his neceſſities; but his rambling manner of life, and conſtant appearance at houſes of public reſort, always procured him a new ſucceſſion of friends, whoſe kindneſs had not been exhauſted by repeated requeſts, ſo that he was ſeldom

abſolutely without reſources, but had in his utmoſt exigencies this comfort, that he always imagined himſelf ſure of ſpeedy relief.

It was obſerved that he always aſked favours of this kind without the leaſt ſubmiſſion or apparent conſciouſneſs of dependence, and that he did not ſeem to look upon a compliance with his requeſt as an obligation that deſerved any extraordinary acknowledgments, but a refuſal was reſented by him as an affront, or complained of as an injury; nor did he readily reconcile himſelf to thoſe who either denied to lend, or gave him afterwards any intimation that they expected to be repaid.

He was ſometimes ſo far compaſſionated by thoſe who knew both his merit and diſtreſſes, that they received him into their families, but they ſoon diſcovered him to be a very incommodious inmate; for being always accuſtomed to an irregular manner of life, he could not confine himſelf to any ſtated hours, or pay any regard to the rules of a family, but would prolong his converſation till midnight, without conſidering that buſineſs might require his friend's application in the morning; and when he had perſuaded himſelf to retire to bed, was not without equal difficulty called up to dinner; it was therefore impoſſible to pay him any diſtinction without the entire ſubverſion of all economy, a kind of eſtabliſhment which, wherever he went, he always appeared ambitious to overthrow.

It muſt therefore be acknowledged, in juſtification of mankind, that it was not always by the negligence or coldneſs of his friends that Savage was diſtreſſed, but becauſe it was in reality very difficult to preſerve him long in a ſtate of eaſe. To ſupply him with money was a hopeleſs attempt; for no ſooner did he ſee himſelf maſter of a ſum ſufficient to ſet him free from care for a day than he became profuſe and luxurious. When once he had entered a tavern, or engaged in a ſcheme of pleaſure, he never retired till want of money obliged him to ſome new expedient. If he was entertained in a family, nothing was any longer to be regarded there but amuſements and jollity: wherever Savage entered he immediately expected that order and buſineſs ſhould fly before him, that all ſhould thenceforward be left to hazard, and that no dull principle of domeſtic management ſhould be oppoſed to his inclination, or intrude upon his gaiety.

His diſtreſſes, however afflictive, never dejected him; in his loweſt ſtate he wanted not ſpirit to aſſert the natural dignity of wit, and was always ready to repreſs that inſolence which ſuperiority of fortune incited, and to trample that reputation which roſe upon any other baſis than that of merit: he never admitted any groſs familiarities, or ſubmitted to be treated otherwiſe than as an equal. Once, when he was without lodging, meat, or clothes, one of his friends, a man not indeed remarkable for moderation in his

proſperity, left a meſſage that he deſired to ſee him about nine in the morning. Savage knew that his intention was to aſſiſt him, but was very much diſguſted that he ſhould preſume to preſcribe the hour of his attendance, and, I believe, refuſed to viſit him, and rejected his kindneſs.

The ſame invincible temper, whether firmneſs or obſtinacy, appeared in his conduct to the Lord Tyrconnel, from whom he very frequently demanded that the allowance which was once paid him ſhould be reſtored, but with whom he never appeared to entertain for a moment the thought of ſoliciting a reconciliation, and whom he treated at once with all the haughtineſs of ſuperiority and all the bitterneſs of reſentment. He wrote to him not in a ſtyle of ſupplication or reſpect, but of reproach, menace, and contempt; and appeared determined, if he ever regained his allowance, to hold it only by the right of conqueſt.

As many more can diſcover that a man is richer than that he is wiſer than themſelves, ſuperiority of underſtanding is not ſo readily acknowledged as that of fortune; nor is that haughtineſs which the conſciouſneſs of great abilities incites borne with the ſame ſubmiſſion as the tyranny of affluence; and therefore Savage, by aſſerting his claim to deference and regard, and by treating thoſe with contempt whom better fortune animated to rebel againſt him, did not

fail to raiſe a great number of enemies in the different claſſes of mankind. Thoſe who thought themſelves raiſed above him by the advantages of riches hated him becauſe they found no protection from the petulance of his wit; thoſe who were eſteemed for their writings feared him as a critic, and maligned him as a rival, and almoſt all the ſmaller wits were his profeſſed enemies.

Among theſe Mr. Millar ſo far indulged his reſentment as to introduce him in a farce, and direct him to be perſonated on the ſtage in a dreſs like that which he then wore; a mean inſult! which only inſinuated that Savage had but one coat, and which was therefore deſpiſed by him rather than reſented; for though he wrote a lampoon againſt Millar he never printed it: and as no other perſon ought to proſecute that revenge from which the perſon who was injured deſiſted, I ſhall not preſerve what Mr. Savage ſuppreſſed, of which the publication would indeed have been a puniſhment too ſevere for ſo impotent an aſſault.

The great hardſhips of poverty were to Savage not the want of lodging or of food, but the neglect and contempt which it drew upon him. He complained that as his affairs grew deſperate he found his reputation for capacity viſibly decline; that his opinion in queſtions of criticiſm was no longer regarded when his coat was out of faſhion; and that thoſe who in the

interval of his proſperity were always encouraging him to great undertakings, by encomiums on his genius, and aſſurances of ſucceſs, now received any mention of his deſigns with coldneſs; thought that the ſubjects on which he propoſed to write were very difficult; and were ready to inform him that the event of a poem was uncertain; that an author ought to employ much time in the conſideration of his plan, and not preſume to ſit down to write in confidence of a few curſory ideas and a ſuperficial knowledge: difficulties were ſtarted on all ſides, and he was no longer qualified for any performance but The Volunteer Laureat.

Yet even this kind of contempt never depreſſed him, for he always preſerved a ſteady confidence in his own capacity, and believed nothing above his reach which he ſhould at any time earneſtly endeavour to attain. He formed ſchemes of the ſame kind with regard to knowledge and to fortune, and flattered himſelf with advances to be made in ſcience, as with riches to be enjoyed in ſome diſtant period of his life. For the acquiſition of knowledge he was indeed far better qualified than for that of riches, for he was naturally inquiſitive, and deſirous of the converſation of thoſe from whom any information was to be obtained, but by no means ſolicitous to improve thoſe opportunities that were ſometimes offered of raiſing his fortune; and he was remarkably retentive of his ideas, which,

when once he was in poſſeſſion of them, rarely forſook him; a quality which could never be communicated to his money.

While he was thus wearing out his life in expectation that the Queen would ſome time recollect her promiſe, he had recourſe to the uſual practice of writers, and publiſhed propoſals for printing his Works by ſubſcription, to which he was encouraged by the ſucceſs of many who had not a better right to the favour of the public; but, whatever was the reaſon, he did not find the world equally inclined to favour him; and he obſerved, with ſome diſcontent, that though he offered his Works at half a guinea, he was able to procure but a ſmall number in compariſon with thoſe who ſubſcribed twice as much to Duck.

Nor was it without indignation that he ſaw his propoſals neglected by the Queen, who patroniſed Mr. Duck's with uncommon ardour, and incited a competition among thoſe who attended the court who ſhould moſt promote his intereſt, and who ſhould firſt offer a ſubſcription. This was a diſtinction to which Mr. Savage made no ſcruple of aſſerting that his birth, his misfortunes, and his genius, gave him a fairer title than could be pleaded by him on whom it was conferred.

Savage's applications were, however, not univerſally unſucceſsful, for ſome of the nobility countenanced his deſign, encouraged his propoſals, and ſub-

ſcribed with great liberality; he related of the Duke of Chandos particularly, that upon receiving his propoſals he ſent him ten guineas.

But the money which his ſubſcriptions afforded him was not leſs volatile than that which he received from his other ſchemes; whenever a ſubſcription was paid him he went to a tavern, and as money ſo collected is neceſſarily received in ſmall ſums, he never was able to ſend his poems to the preſs, but for many years continued his ſolicitation, and ſquandered whatever he obtained.

This project of printing his Works was frequently revived; and as his propoſals grew obſolete new ones were printed with freſher dates. To form ſchemes for the publication was one of his favourite amuſements, nor was he ever more at eaſe than when, with any friend who readily fell in with his ſchemes, he was adjuſting the print, forming the advertiſements, and regulating the diſperſion of his new edition, which he really intended ſome time to publiſh, and which, as long as experience had ſhewn him the impoſſiblity of printing the volume together, he at laſt determined to divide into weekly or monthly numbers, that the profits of the firſt might ſupply the expenſes of the next.

Thus he ſpent his time in mean expedients and tormenting ſuſpenſe, living for the greateſt part in fear of proſecutions from his creditors, and, conſequently,

ſkulking in obſcure parts of the Town, of which he was no ſtranger to the remoteſt corners. But wherever he came his addreſs ſecured him friends, whom his neceſſities ſoon alienated, ſo that he had perhaps a more numerous acquaintance than any man ever before attained, there being ſcarcely any perſon eminent on any account to whom he was not known, or whoſe character he was not in ſome degree able to delineate.

To the acquiſition of this extenſive acquaintance every circumſtance of his life contributed: he excelled in the arts of converſation, and therefore willingly practiſed them: he had ſeldom any home, or even a lodging, in which he could be private, and therefore was driven into public-houſes for the common conveniencies of life and ſupports of nature: he was always ready to comply with every invitation, having no employment to with-hold him, and often no money to provide for himſelf; and by dining with one company he never failed of obtaining an introduction into another.

Thus diſſipated was his life, and thus caſual his ſubſiſtence; yet did not the diſtraction of his views hinder him from reflection, nor the uncertainty of his condition depreſs his gaiety. When he had wandered about without any fortunate adventure by which he was led into a tavern, he ſometimes retired into the fields, and was able to employ his mind in ſtudy, or amuſe it with pleaſing imaginations, and ſeldom

appeared to be melancholy, but when ſome ſudden misfortune had juſt fallen upon him, and even then, in a few moments, he would diſentangle himſelf from his perplexity, adopt the ſubject of converſation, and apply his mind wholly to the objects that others preſented to it.

This life, unhappy as it may be already imagined, was yet imbittered in 1738 with new calamities. The death of the Queen deprived him of all the proſpects of preferment with which he ſo long entertained his imagination; and as Sir Robert Walpole had before given him reaſon to believe that he never intended the performance of his promiſe, he was now abandoned again to fortune.

He was, however, at that time ſupported by a friend; and as it was not his cuſtom to look out for diſtant calamities, or to feel any other pain than that which forced itſelf upon his ſenſes, he was not much afflicted at his loſs, and perhaps comforted himſelf that his penſion would be now continued without the annual tribute of a panegyric.

Another expectation contributed likewiſe to ſupport him: he had taken a reſolution to write a ſecond tragedy upon the ſtory of Sir Thomas Overbury, in which he preſerved a few lines of his former play, but made a total alteration of the plan, added new incidents, and introduced new characters; ſo that it was a new tragedy, not a revival of the former.

Many of his friends blamed him for not making choice of another ſubject; but, in vindication of himſelf, he aſſerted that it was not eaſy to find a better, and that he thought it his intereſt to extinguiſh the memory of the firſt tragedy, which he could only do by writing one leſs defective upon the ſame ſtory, by which he ſhould entirely defeat the artifice of the bookſellers, who, after the death of any author of reputation, are always induſtrious to ſwell his works, by uniting his worſt productions with his beſt.

In the execution of this ſcheme, however, he proceeded but ſlowly, and probably only employed himſelf upon it when he could find no other amuſement; but he pleaſed himſelf with counting the profits, and perhaps imagined that the theatrical reputation which he was about to acquire would be equivalent to all that he had loſt by the death of his patroneſs.

He did not, in confidence of his approaching riches, neglect the meaſures proper to ſecure the continuance of his penſion, though ſome of his favourers thought him culpable for omitting to write on her death; but on her birth-day next year he gave a proof of the ſolidity of his judgment and the power of his genius. He knew that the track of elegy had been ſo long beaten that it was impoſſible to travel in it without treading in the footſteps of thoſe who had gone before him, and that therefore it was neceſſary, that he might diſtinguiſh himſelf from the herd

of encomiaſts, to find out ſome new walk of funeral panegyric.

This difficult taſk he performed in ſuch a manner, that his poem may be juſtly ranked among the beſt pieces that the death of princes has produced. By tranſferring the mention of her death to her birth-day he has formed a happy combination of topics, which any other man would have thought it very difficult to connect in one view, but which he has united in ſuch a manner, that the relation between them appears natural; and it may be juſtly ſaid, that what no other man would have thought on it now appears ſcarcely poſſible for any man to miſs.

The beauty of this peculiar combination of images is ſo maſterly that it is ſufficient to ſet this poem above cenſure; and therefore it is not neceſſary to mention many other delicate touches which may be found in it, and which would deſervedly be admired in any other performance.

To theſe proofs of his genius may be added, from the ſame poem, an inſtance of his prudence, an excellence for which he was not ſo often diſtinguiſhed; he does not forget to remind the King, in the moſt delicate and artful manner, of continuing his penſion.

With regard to the ſucceſs of this addreſs he was for ſome time in ſuſpenſe, but was in no great degree ſolicitous about it, and continued his labour upon his

new tragedy with great tranquillity, till the friend who had for a conſiderable time ſupported him, removing his family to another place, took occaſion to diſmiſs him. It then became neceſſary to inquire more diligently what was determined in his affair, having reaſon to ſuſpect that no great favour was intended him, becauſe he had not received his penſion at the uſual time.

It is ſaid that he did not take thoſe methods of retrieving his intereſt which were moſt likely to ſucceed, and ſome of thoſe who were employed in the Exchequer cautioned him againſt too much violence in his proceedings; but Mr. Savage, who ſeldom regulated his conduct by the advice of others, gave way to his paſſion, and demanded of Sir Robert Walpole, at his levee, the reaſon of the diſtinction that was made between him and the other penſioners of the Queen with a degree of roughneſs, which perhaps determined him to withdraw what had been only delayed.

Whatever was the crime of which he was accuſed or ſuſpected, and whatever influence was employed againſt him, he received ſoon after an account that took from him all hopes of regaining his penſion; and he had now no proſpect of ſubſiſtence but from his play, and he knew no way of living for the time required to finiſh it.

So peculiar were the misfortunes of this man, de-

prived of an eſtate and title by a particular law, expoſed and abandoned by a mother, defrauded by a mother of a fortune which his father had allotted him, he entered the world without a friend; and though his abilities forced themſelves into eſteem and reputation he was never able to obtain any real advantage, and whatever proſpects aroſe were always intercepted as he began to approach them. The King's intentions in his favour were fruſtrated; his Dedication to the Prince, whoſe generoſity on every other occaſion was eminent, procured him no reward; Sir Robert Walpole, who valued himſelf upon keeping his promiſe to others, broke it to him without regret; and the bounty of the Queen was, after her death, withdrawn from him, and from him only.

Such were his misfortunes, which yet he bore not only with decency but with cheerfulneſs, nor was his gaiety clouded even by his laſt diſappointments, though he was in a ſhort time reduced to the loweſt degree of diſtreſs, and often wanted both lodging and food. At this time he gave another inſtance of the unſurmountable obſtinacy of his ſpirit; his clothes were worn out, and he received notice that at a coffeehouſe ſome clothes and linen were left for him; the perſon who ſent them did not, I believe, inform him to whom he was to be obliged, that he might ſpare the perplexity of acknowledging the benefit;

but though the offer was ſo far generous it was made with ſome neglect of ceremonies, which Mr. Savage ſo much reſented that he refuſed the preſent, and declined to enter the houſe till the clothes that had been deſigned for him were taken away.

His diſtreſs was now publicly known, and his friends, therefore, thought it proper to concert ſome meaſures for his relief; and one of them wrote a letter to him, in which he expreſſed his concern "for "the miſerable withdrawing of his penſion;" and gave him hopes, that in a ſhort time he ſhould find himſelf ſupplied with a competence "without any "dependence on thoſe little creatures, which we are "pleaſed to call The Great."

The ſcheme propoſed for this happy and independent ſubſiſtence was, that he ſhould retire into Wales, and receive an allowance of fifty pounds a-year, to be raiſed by a ſubſcription, on which he was to live privately, in a cheap place, without aſpiring any more to affluence, or having any farther care of reputation.

This offer Mr. Savage gladly accepted, though with intentions very different from thoſe of his friends; for they propoſed that he ſhould continue an exile from London for ever, and ſpend all the remaining part of his life at Swanſea; but he deſigned only to take the opportunity which their ſcheme offered him of retreating for a ſhort time, that he might prepare his play for the ſtage, and his other Works for the

preſs, and then to return to London to exhibit his tragedy, and live upon the profits of his own labour.

With regard to his Works, he propoſed very great improvements, which would have required much time, or great application; and when he had finiſhed them he deſigned to do juſtice to his ſubſcribers by publiſhing them, according to his propoſals.

As he was ready to entertain himſelf with future pleaſures, he had planned out a ſcheme of life for the country, of which he had no knowledge but from paſtorals and ſongs. He imagined that he ſhould be tranſported to ſcenes of flowery felicity, like thoſe which one poet has reflected to another, and had projected a perpetual round of innocent pleaſures, of which he ſuſpected no interruption from pride, or ignorance, or brutality.

With theſe expectations he was ſo enchanted, that when he was once gently reproached by a friend for ſubmitting to live upon a ſubſcription, and adviſed rather by a reſolute exertion of his abilities to ſupport himſelf, he could not bear to debar himſelf from the happineſs which was to be found in the calm of a cottage, or loſe the opportunity of liſtening, without intermiſſion, to the melody of the nightingale, which he believed was to be heard from every bramble, and which he did not fail to mention as a very important part of the happineſs of a country life.

While this ſcheme was ripening his friends direct-

ed him to take a lodging in the liberties of the Fleet, that he might be ſecure from his creditors, and ſent him every Monday a guinea, which he commonly ſpent before the next morning, and truſted, after his uſual manner, the remaining part of the week to the bounty of Fortune.

He now began very ſenſibly to feel the miſeries of dependence: thoſe by whom he was to be ſupported began to preſcribe to him with an air of authority, which he knew not how decently to reſent nor patiently to bear; and he ſoon diſcovered, from the conduct of moſt of his ſubſcribers, that he was yet in the hands of "Little creatures."

Of the inſolence that he was obliged to ſuffer he gave many inſtances, of which none appeared to raiſe his indignation to a greater height than the method which was taken of furniſhing him with clothes. Inſtead of conſulting him, and allowing him to ſend a tailor his orders for what they thought proper to allow him, they propoſed to ſend for a tailor to take his meaſure, and then to conſult how they ſhould equip him.

This treatment was not very delicate, nor was it ſuch as Savage's humanity would have ſuggeſted to him on a like occaſion; but it had ſcarcely deſerved mention had it not, by affecting him in an uncommon degree, ſhewn the peculiarity of his character. Upon hearing the deſign that was formed he came

to the lodging of a friend with the moſt violent agonies of rage; and being aſked what it could be that gave him ſuch diſturbance, he replied with the utmoſt vehemence of indignation, "that they had ſent for "a tailor to meaſure him."

How the affair ended was never inquired for fear of renewing his uneaſineſs. It is probable that, upon recollection, he ſubmitted with a good grace to what he could not avoid, and that he diſcovered no reſentment where he had no power.

He was, however, not humbled to implicit and univerſal compliance; for when the gentleman who had firſt informed him of the deſign to ſupport him by a ſubſcription attempted to procure a reconciliation with the Lord Tyrconnel, he could by no means be prevailed upon to comply with the meaſures that were propoſed.

A letter was written for him to Sir William Lemon, to prevail upon him to interpoſe his good offices with Lord Tyrconnel, in which he ſolicited Sir William's aſſiſtance "for a man who really needed it as "much as any man could well do;" and informed him that he was retiring "for ever to a place where "he ſhould no more trouble his relations, friends, or "enemies;" he confeſſed that his paſſion had betrayed him to ſome conduct with regard to Lord Tyrconnel "for which he could not but heartily aſk his pardon;" and as he imagined Lord Tyrconnel's paſſion might

be yet ſo high that he would not "receive a letter "from him," begged that Sir William would endeavour to ſoften him; and expreſſed his hopes that he would comply with his requeſt, and that "ſo ſmall "a relation would not harden his heart againſt him."

That any man ſhould preſume to dictate a letter to him was not very agreeable to Mr. Savage, and therefore he was, before he had opened it, not much inclined to approve it; but when he read it he found it contained ſentiments entirely oppoſite to his own, and, as he aſſerted, to the truth; and therefore, inſtead of copying it, wrote his friend a letter full of maſculine reſentment and warm expoſtulations. He very juſtly obſerved that the ſtyle was too ſupplicatory, and the repreſentation too abject, and that he ought at leaſt to have made him complain with "the "dignity of a gentleman in diſtreſs." He declared that he would not write the paragraph in which he was to aſk Lord Tyrconnel's pardon, for "he deſpiſed "his pardon, and therefore could not heartily, and "would not hypocritically, aſk it." He remarked, that his friend made a very unreaſonable diſtinction between himſelf and him; for, ſays he, when you mention men of high rank "in your own character," they "are thoſe little creatures whom we are pleaſed to call "The Great;" but when you addreſs them "in mine," no ſervility is ſufficiently humble. He then, with great propriety, explained the ill conſequences which might

be expected from such a letter, which his relations would print in their own defence, and which would for ever be produced as a full answer to all that he should allege against them; for he always intended to publish a minute account of the treatment which he had received. It is to be remembered, to the honour of the gentleman by whom this letter was drawn up, that he yielded to Mr. Savage's reasons, and agreed that it ought to be suppressed.

After many alterations and delays a subscription was at length raised, which did not amount to fifty pounds a-year, though twenty were paid by one gentleman; such was the generosity of mankind, that what had been done by a player without solicitation could not now be effected by application and interest! and Savage had a great number to court and to obey for a pension less than that which Mrs. Oldfield paid him without exacting any servilities!

Mr. Savage, however, was satisfied and willing to retire, and was convinced that the allowance, though scanty, would be more than sufficient for him, being now determined to commence a rigid economist, and to live according to the exactest rules of frugality; for nothing was in his opinion more contemptible than a man who, when he knew his income, exceeded it: and yet he confessed that instances of such folly were too common, and lamented that some men were not to be trusted with their own money.

Full of theſe ſalutary reſolutions he left London in July 1739, having taken leave, with great tenderneſs, of his friends, and parted from the Author of this Narrative with tears in his eyes. He was furniſhed with fifteen guineas, and informed, that they would be ſufficient not only for the expenſe of his journey but for his ſupport in Wales for ſome time; and that there remained but little more of the firſt collection. He promiſed a ſtrict adherence to his maxims of parſimony, and went away in the ſtage-coach; nor did his friends expect to hear from him till he informed them of his arrival at Swanſea.

But when they leaſt expected arrived a letter, dated the 14th day after his departure, in which he ſent them word that he was yet upon the road, and without money, and that he therefore could not proceed without a remittance. They then ſent him the money that was in their hands, with which he was enabled to reach Briſtol, from whence he was to go to Swanſea by water.

At Briſtol he found an embargo laid upon the ſhipping, ſo that he could not immediately obtain a paſſage; and being therefore obliged to ſtay there ſome time, he, with his uſual felicity, ingratiated himſelf with many of the principal inhabitants, was invited to their houſes, diſtinguiſhed at their public feaſts, and treated with a regard that gratified his vanity, and therefore eaſily engaged his affection.

He began very early after his retirement to complain of the conduct of his friends in London, and irritated many of them so much by his letters that they withdrew, however honourably, their contributions; and it is believed that little more was paid him than the twenty pounds a-year which were allowed him by the gentleman who proposed the subscription.

After some stay at Bristol he retired to Swansea, the place originally proposed for his residence, where he lived about a year very much dissatisfied with the diminution of his salary; but contracted, as in other places, acquaintance with those who were most distinguished in that country, among whom he has celebrated Mr. Powel and Mrs. Jones by some verses, which he inserted in The Gentleman's Magazine.

Here he completed his tragedy, of which two acts were wanting when he left London, and was desirous of coming to Town to bring it upon the stage. This design was very warmly opposed, and he was advised by his chief benefactor to put it into the hands of Mr. Thomson and Mr. Mallet, that it might be fitted for the stage, and to allow his friends to receive the profits, out of which an annual pension should be paid him.

This proposal he rejected with the utmost contempt. He was by no means convinced that the judgment of those to whom he was required to submit was superior to his own. He was now determined, as he ex-

preſſed it, to be "no longer kept in leadingſtrings," and had no elevated idea of "his bounty" who propoſed to "penſion him out of the profits of his own "labour."

He attempted, in Wales, to promote a ſubſcription for his Works, and had once hopes of ſucceſs; but in a ſhort time afterwards formed a reſolution of leaving that part of the country, to which he thought it not reaſonable to be confined for the gratification of thoſe who, having promiſed him a liberal income, had no ſooner baniſhed him to a remote corner than they reduced his allowance to a ſalary ſcarcely equal to the neceſſities of life.

His reſentment of this treatment, which, in his own opinion at leaſt, he had not deſerved, was ſuch that he broke off all correſpondence with moſt of his contributors, and appeared to conſider them as perſecutors and oppreſſors; and in the latter part of his life declared, that their conduct toward him ſince his departure from London "had been perfidiouſneſs "improving on perfidiouſneſs, and inhumanity on "inhumanity."

It is not to be ſuppoſed that the neceſſities of Mr. Savage did not ſometimes incite him to ſatirical exaggerations of the behaviour of thoſe by whom he thought himſelf reduced to them; but it muſt be granted that the diminution of his allowance was a great hardſhip, and that thoſe who withdrew their ſubſcrip-

tion from a man who, upon the faith of their promiſe, had gone into a kind of baniſhment, and abandoned all thoſe by whom he had been before relieved in his diſtreſſes, will find it no eaſy taſk to vindicate their conduct.

It may be alleged, and perhaps juſtly, that he was petulant and contemptuous; that he more frequently reproached his ſubſcribers for not giving him more than thanked them for what he received; but it is to be remembered that this conduct, and this is the worſt charge that can be drawn up againſt him, did them no real injury; and that it therefore ought rather to have been pited than reſented, at leaſt the reſentment it might provoke ought to have been generous and manly; epithets which his conduct will hardly deſerve that ſtarves the man whom he has perſuaded to put himſelf into his power.

It might have been reaſonably demanded by Savage, that they ſhould, before they had taken away what they promiſed, have replaced him in his former ſtate; that they ſhould have taken no advantages from the ſituation to which the appearance of their kindneſs had reduced him, and that he ſhould have been recalled to London before he was abandoned: he might juſtly repreſent that he ought to have been conſidered as a lion in the toils, and demand to be releaſed before the dogs ſhould be looſed upon him.

He endeavoured, indeed, to releaſe himſelf, and,

with an intent to return to London went to Briſtol, where a repetition of the kindneſs which he had formerly found invited him to ſtay. He was not only careſſed and treated, but had a collection made for him of about thirty pounds, with which it had been happy if he had immediately departed for London; but his negligence did not ſuffer him to conſider that ſuch proofs of kindneſs were not often to be expected, and that this ardour of benevolence was in a great degree the effect of novelty, and might, probably, be every day leſs; and therefore he took no care to improve the happy time, but was encouraged by one favour to hope for another, till at length generoſity was exhauſted, and officiouſneſs wearied.

Another part of his miſconduct was the practice of prolonging his viſits to unſeaſonable hours, and diſconcerting all the families into which he was admitted. This was an error in a place of commerce which all the charms of his converſation could not compenſate; for what trader would purchaſe ſuch airy ſatisfaction by the loſs of ſolid gain? which muſt be the conſequence of midnight merriment, as thoſe hours which were gained at night were generally loſt in the morning.

Thus Mr. Savage, after the curioſity of the inhabitants was gratified, found the number of his friends daily decreaſing, perhaps without ſuſpecting for what reaſon their conduct was altered; for he ſtill conti-

nued to haraſs with his nocturnal intruſions thoſe that yet countenanced him, and admitted him to their houſes.

But he did not ſpend all the time of his reſidence at Briſtol in viſits or at taverns, for he ſometimes returned to his ſtudies, and began ſeveral conſiderable deſigns. When he felt an inclination to write, he always retired from the knowledge of his friends, and lay hid in an obſcure part of the ſuburbs till he found himſelf again deſirous of company, to which it is likely that intervals of abſence made him more welcome.

He was always full of his deſign of returning to London to bring his tragedy upon the ſtage; but having neglected to depart with the money that was raiſed for him, he could not afterwards procure a ſum ſufficient to defray the expenſes of his journey; nor perhaps would a freſh ſupply have had any other effect than, by putting immediate pleaſures in his power, to have driven the thoughts of his journey out of his mind.

While he was thus ſpending the day in contriving a ſcheme for the morrow diſtreſs ſtole upon him by imperceptible degrees. His conduct had already wearied ſome of thoſe who were at firſt enamoured of his converſation: but he might, perhaps, ſtill have devolved to others, whom he might have entertained with equal ſucceſs, had not the decay of his clothes made

it no longer conſiſtent with their vanity to admit him to their tables, or to aſſociate with him in public places. He now began to find every man from home at whoſe houſe he called, and was therefore no longer able to procure the neceſſaries of life, but wandered about the town ſlighted and neglected in queſt of a dinner which he did not always obtain.

To complete his miſery he was purſued by the officers for ſmall debts which he had contracted, and was therefore obliged to withdraw from the ſmall number of friends from whom he had ſtill reaſon to hope for favours. His cuſtom was to lie in bed the greateſt part of the day, and to go out in the dark with the utmoſt privacy, and after having paid his viſit return again before morning to his lodging, which was in the garret of an obſcure inn.

Being thus excluded on one hand, and confined on the other, he ſuffered the utmoſt extremities of poverty, and often faſted ſo long that he was ſeized with faintneſs, and had loſt his appetite, not being able to bear the ſmell of meat till the action of his ſtomach was reſtored by a cordial.

In this diſtreſs he received a remittance of five pounds from London, with which he provided himſelf a decent coat, and determined to go to London, but unhappily ſpent his money at a favourite tavern. Thus was he again confined to Briſtol, where he was

every day hunted by bailiffs. In this exigence he once more found a friend, who ſheltered him in his houſe, though at the uſual inconveniencies with which his company was attended; for he could neither be perſuaded to go to bed in the night nor to riſe in the day.

It is obſervable that in theſe various ſcenes of miſery he was always diſengaged and cheerful: he at ſome times purſued his ſtudies, and at others continued or enlarged his epiſtolary correſpondence, nor was he ever ſo far dejected as to endeavour to procure an increaſe of his allowance by any other methods than accuſations and reproaches.

He had now no longer any hopes of aſſiſtance from his friends at Briſtol, who, as merchants, and, by conſequence, ſufficiently ſtudious of profit, cannot be ſuppoſed to have looked with much compaſſion upon negligence and extravagance, or to think any excellence equivalent to a fault of ſuch conſequence as neglect of economy. It is natural to imagine that many of thoſe who would have relieved his real wants were diſcouraged from the exertion of their benevolence by obſervation of the uſe which was made of their favours, and conviction that relief would only be momentary, and that the ſame neceſſity would quickly return.

At laſt he quitted the houſe of his friend, and returned to his lodging at the inn, ſtill intending to ſet

out in a few days for London; but on the 10th of January 1742-3, having been at ſupper with two of his friends, he was, at his return to his lodgings, arreſted for a debt of about eight pounds, which he owed at a coffeehouſe, and conducted to the houſe of a ſheriff's officer. The account which he gives of this misfortune, in a letter to one of the gentlemen with whom he had ſupped, is too remarkable to be omitted.

"It was not a little unfortunate for me that I ſpent "yeſterday's evening with you, becauſe the hour "hindered me from entering on my new lodging; "however I have now got one, but ſuch an one as, "I believe, no body would chuſe.

"I was arreſted at the ſuit of Mrs. Read juſt as "I was going up ſtairs to bed at Mr. Bowyer's, but "taken in ſo private a manner that I believe no body "at The White Lyon is appriſed of it. Though I let "the officers know the ſtrength (or rather weakneſs) "of my pocket, yet they treated me with the utmoſt "civility; and even when they conducted me to con-"finement, it was in ſuch a manner that I verily be-"lieve I could have eſcaped, which I would rather "be ruined than have done, notwithſtanding the "whole amount of my finances was but three-pence "halfpenny.

"In the firſt place, I muſt inſiſt that you will in-"duſtriouſly conceal this from Mrs. S——s, becauſe

"I would not have her good nature ſuffer that pain "which, I know, ſhe would be apt to feel on this oc- "caſion.

"Next I conjure you, dear Sir! by all the ties of "friendſhip, by no means to have one uneaſy thought "on my account, but to have the ſame pleaſantry of "countenance and unruffled ſerenity of mind which "(God be praiſed!) I have in this, and have had in "a much ſeverer calamity. Furthermore, I charge "you, if you value my friendſhip as truly as I do "your's, not to utter, or even harbour, the leaſt re- "ſentment againſt Mrs. Read. I believe ſhe has "ruined me, but I freely forgive her; and (though "I will never more have any intimacy with her) "would, at a due diſtance, rather do her an act of "good than ill will. Laſtly, (pardon the expreſſion) "I abſolutely command you not to offer me any pe- "cuniary aſſiſtance, nor to attempt getting me any "from any one of your friends. At another time, or "on any other occaſion, you may, dear friend! be "well aſſured I would rather write to you in the ſub- "miſſive ſtyle of a requeſt than that of a peremptory "command.

"However, that my truly valuable friend may not "think I am too proud to aſk a favour, let me entreat "you to let me have your boy to attend me for this "day, not only for the ſake of ſaving me the expenſe

"of porters, but for the delivery of ſome letters to "people whoſe names I would not have known to "ſtrangers.

"The civil treatment I have thus far met from "thoſe whoſe priſoner I am, makes me thankful to "the Almighty that, tho' he has thought fit to viſit "me (on my birth-night) with affliction, yet (ſuch "is his great goodneſs!) my affliction is not without "alleviating circumſtances. I murmur not, but am "all reſignation to the divine will. As to the world, "I hope that I ſhall be endued by Heaven with that "preſence of mind, that ſerene dignity in misfortune, "that conſtitutes the character of a true nobleman; "a dignity far beyond that of coronets; a nobility ari- "ſing from the juſt principles of philoſophy, refined "and exalted by thoſe of Chriſtianity."——

He continued five days at the officer's, in hopes that he ſhould be able to procure bail, and avoid the neceſſity of going to priſon. The ſtate in which he paſſed his time, and the treatment which he received, are very juſtly expreſſed by him in a letter which he wrote to a friend: "The whole day," ſays he, "has "been employed in various peoples' filling my head "with their fooliſh chimerical ſyſtems, which has "obliged me coolly (as far as nature will admit) to "digeſt and accommodate myſelf to every different "perſon's way of thinking; hurried from one wild

"ſyſtem to another, till it has quite made a chaos of "my imagination, and nothing done—promiſed— "diſappointed—ordered to ſend every hour from "one part of the town to the other."———

When his friends, who had hitherto careſſed and applauded, found that to give bail and pay the debt was the ſame, they all refuſed to preſerve him from a priſon at the expenſe of eight pounds; and therefore after having been for ſome time at the officer's houſe "at an immenſe expenſe," as he obſerves in his letter, he was at length removed to Newgate.

This expenſe he was enabled to ſupport by the generoſity of Mr. Naſh at Bath, who, upon receiving from him an account of his condition, immediately ſent him five guineas, and promiſed to promote his ſubſcription at Bath with all his intereſt.

By his removal to Newgate he obtained at leaſt a freedom from ſuſpenſe, and reſt from the diſturbing viciſſitudes of hope and diſappointment; he now found that his friends were only companions, who were willing to ſhare his gaiety but not to partake of his misfortunes, and therefore he no longer expected any aſſiſtance from them.

It muſt, however, be obſerved of one gentleman, that he offered to releaſe him by paying the debt, but that Mr. Savage would not conſent; I ſuppoſe, becauſe he thought he had been before too burthenſome to him.

He was offered, by ſome of his friends, that a collection ſhould be made for his enlargement; but he "treated the propoſal," and declared, "that he "ſhould again treat it, with diſdain. As to writing "any mendicant letters he had too high a ſpirit, and "determined only to write to ſome miniſters of ſtate "to try to regain his penſion."

He continued to complain of thoſe that had ſent him into the country, and objected to them, that he had "loſt the profits of his play which had been finiſh-"ed three years;" and in another letter declares his reſolution to publiſh a pamphlet, that the world might know how "he had been uſed."

This pamphlet was never written, for he in a very ſhort time recovered his uſual tranquillity, and cheerfully applied himſelf to more inoffenſive ſtudies. He indeed ſteadily declared, that he was promiſed a yearly allowance of fifty pounds and never received half the ſum; but he ſeemed to reſign himſelf to that as well as to other misfortunes, and loſe the remembrance of it in his amuſements and employments.

The cheerfulneſs with which he bore his confinement appears from the following letter, which he wrote January the 30th, to one of his friends in London:

"I now write to you from my confinement in "Newgate, where I have been ever ſince Monday

"laſt was ſe'ennight, and where I enjoy myſelf with "much more tranquillity than I have known for up-"wards of a twelvemonth paſt, having a room en-"tirely to myſelf, and purſuing the amuſement of my "poetical ſtudies uninterrupted, and agreeable to my "mind. I thank the Almighty I am now all collected "in myſelf; and though my perſon is in confinement "my mind can expatiate on ample and uſeful ſubjects "with all the freedom imaginable. I am now more "converſant with the Nine than ever; and if, inſtead "of a Newgate-bird, I may be allowed to be a bird "of the Muſes, I aſſure you, Sir, I ſing very freely "in my cage; ſometimes indeed in the plaintive "notes of the nightingale, but at others in the cheer-"ful ſtrains of the lark."——

In another letter he obſerves, that he ranges from one ſubject to another, without confining himſelf to any particular taſk, and that he was employed one week upon one attempt, and the next upon another.

Surely the fortitude of this man deſerves, at leaſt, to be mentioned with applauſe; and whatever faults may be imputed to him, the virtue of ſuffering well cannot be denied him. The two powers which, in the opinion of Epictetus, conſtituted a wiſe man, are thoſe of bearing and forbearing, which cannot indeed be affirmed to have been equally poſſeſſed by Savage; and indeed the want of one obliged him very frequently to practiſe the other.

He was treated by Mr. Dagg, the keeper of the priſon, with great humanity; was ſupported by him at his own table without any certainty of recompenſe, had a room to himſelf, to which he could at any time retire from all diſturbance, was allowed to ſtand at the door of the priſon, and ſometimes taken out into the fields; ſo that he ſuffered fewer hardſhips in priſon than he had been accuſtomed to undergo in the greateſt part of his life.

The keeper did not confine his benevolence to a gentle execution of his office, but made ſome overtures to the creditor for his releaſe, but without effect, and continued, during the whole time of his impriſonment, to treat him with the utmoſt tenderneſs and civility.

Virtue is undoubtedly moſt laudable in that ſtate which makes it moſt difficult, and therefore the humanity of a gaoler certainly deſerves this public atteſtation; and the man whoſe heart has not been hardened by ſuch an employment may be juſtly propoſed as a pattern of benevolence. If an inſcription was once engraved to the "honeſt tollgatherer," leſs honour ought not to be paid "to the tender gaoler."

Mr. Savage very frequently received viſits, and ſometimes preſents, from his acquaintances, but they did not amount to a ſubſiſtence, for the greater part of which he was indebted to the generoſity of this

keeper; but theſe favours, however they might endear to him the particular perſons from whom he received them, were very far from impreſſing upon his mind any advantageous ideas of the people of Briſtol, and therefore he thought he could not more properly employ himſelf in priſon than in writing a poem called "London and Briſtol delineated."

When he had brought this poem to its preſent ſtate, which, without conſidering the chaſm, is not perfect, he wrote to London an account of his deſign, and informed his friend that he was determined to print it with his name, but enjoined him not to communicate his intention to his Briſtol acquaintance: the gentleman, ſurpriſed at his reſolution, endeavoured to diſſuade him from publiſhing it, at leaſt from prefixing his name, and declared that he could not reconcile the injunction of ſecrecy with his reſolution to own it at its firſt appearance. To this Mr. Savage returned an anſwer, agreeable to his character, in the following terms:

"I received your's this morning, and not without "a little ſurpriſe at the contents. To anſwer a que- "ſtion with a queſtion you aſk me concerning Lon- "don and Briſtol, Why will I add delineated? Why "did Mr. Woolaſton add the ſame word to his Reli- "gion of Nature? I ſuppoſe it was his will and plea- "ſure to add it in his caſe, and it is mine to do ſo in

"my own. You are pleaſed to tell me that you un-
"derſtand not why ſecrecy is enjoined, and yet I in-
"tend to ſet my name to it. My anſwer is—I have
"my private reaſons, which I am not obliged to ex-
"plain to any one. You doubt my friend Mr. S——
"would not approve of it—And what is it to me
"whether he does or not? Do you imagine that
"Mr. S—— is to dictate to me? If any man, who
"calls himſelf my friend, ſhould aſſume ſuch an air,
"I would ſpurn at his friendſhip with contempt. You
"ſay I ſeem to think ſo by not letting him know it.
"—And ſuppoſe I do, what then? perhaps I can
"give reaſons for that diſapprobation very foreign
"from what you would imagine. You go on in
"ſaying, Suppoſe I ſhould not put my name to it—
"My anſwer is, that I will not ſuppoſe any ſuch
"thing, being determined to the contrary; neither,
"Sir, would I have you ſuppoſe that I applied to
"you for want of another preſs, nor would I have
"you imagine that I owe Mr. S—— obligations
"which I do not."

Such was his imprudence, and ſuch his obſtinate adherence to his own reſolutions, however abſurd. A priſoner! ſupported by charity! and, whatever inſults he might have received during the latter part of his ſtay in Briſtol, once careſſed, eſteemed, and preſented with a liberal collection, he could forget on a

ſudden his danger and his obligations to gratify the petulance of his wit, or the eagerneſs of his reſentment, and publiſhed a ſatire, by which he might reaſonably expect that he ſhould alienate thoſe who then ſupported him, and provoke thoſe whom he could neither reſiſt nor eſcape.

This reſolution, from the execution of which it is probable that only his death could have hindered him, is ſufficient to ſhew how much he diſregarded all conſiderations that oppoſed his preſent paſſions, and how readily he hazarded all future advantages for any immediate gratifications. Whatever was his predominant inclination, neither hope nor fear hindered him from complying with it, nor had oppoſition any other effect than to heighten his ardour, and irritate his vehemence.

This performance was, however, laid aſide, while he was employed in ſoliciting aſſiſtance from ſeveral great perſons, and one interruption ſucceeding another hindered him from ſupplying the chaſm, and perhaps from retouching the other parts, which he can hardly be imagined to have finiſhed in his own opinion: for it is very unequal, and ſome of the lines are rather inſerted to rhyme to others than to ſupport or improve the ſenſe; but the firſt and laſt parts are worked up with great ſpirit and elegance.

His time was ſpent in the priſon, for the moſt part,

in ſtudy or in receiving viſits; but ſometimes he deſcended to lower amuſements, and diverted himſelf in the kitchen with the converſation of the criminals; for it was not pleaſing to him to be much without company; and though he was very capable of a judicious choice, he was often contented with the firſt that offered: for this he was ſometimes reproved by his friends, who found him ſurrounded with felons; but the reproof was on that, as on other occaſions, thrown away; he continued to gratify himſelf, and to ſet very little value on the opinion of others.

But here, as in every other ſcene of his life, he made uſe of ſuch opportunities as occurred of benefiting thoſe who were more miſerable than himſelf, and was always ready to perform any offices of humanity to his fellow-priſoners.

He had now ceaſed from correſponding with any of his ſubſcribers except one, who yet continued to remit him the twenty pounds a-year which he had promiſed him, and by whom it was expected that he would have been in a very ſhort time enlarged, becauſe he had directed the keeper to inquire after the ſtate of his debts.

However, he took care to enter his name according to the forms of the court, that the creditor might be obliged to make him ſome allowance if he was continued a priſoner, and when on that occaſion he ap-

peared in the hall was treated with very unuſual reſpect.

But the reſentment of the City was afterwards raiſed by ſome accounts that had been ſpread of the ſatire, and he was informed that ſome of the merchants intended to pay the allowance which the law required, and to detain him a priſoner at their own expenſe. This he treated as an empty menace, and perhaps might have haſtened the publication, only to ſhew how much he was ſuperior to their inſults, had not all his ſchemes been ſuddenly deſtroyed.

When he had been ſix months in priſon he received from one of his friends *, in whoſe kindneſs he had the greateſt confidence, and on whoſe aſſiſtance he chiefly depended, a letter that contained a charge of very atrocious ingratitude, drawn up in ſuch terms as ſudden reſentment dictated. Mr. Savage returned a very ſolemn proteſtation of his innocence, but, however, appeared much diſturbed at the accuſation. Some days afterwards he was ſeized with a pain in his back and ſide, which, as it was not violent, was not ſuſpected to be dangerous; but, growing daily more languid and dejected, on the 25th of July he confined himſelf to his room, and a fever ſeized his ſpirits. The ſymptoms grew every day more formi-

* Mr. Pope.

dable, but his condition did not enable him to procure any aſſiſtance. The laſt time that the keeper ſaw him was on July the 31ſt 1743, when Savage, ſeeing him at his bedſide, ſaid, with an uncommon earneſtneſs, "I have ſomething to ſay to you, Sir;" but, after a pauſe, moved his hand in a melancholy manner, and finding himſelf unable to recollect what he was going to communicate, ſaid, "'Tis gone!" The keeper ſoon after left him, and the next morning he died. He was buried in the churchyard of St. Peter at the expenſe of the keeper.

Such were the life and death of Richard Savage, a man equally diſtinguiſhed by his virtues and vices, and at once remarkable for his weakneſſes and abilities.

He was of a middle ſtature, of a thin habit of body, a long viſage, coarſe features, and melancholy aſpect; of a grave and manly deportment, a ſolemn dignity of mien, but which, upon a nearer acquaintance, ſoftened into an engaging eaſineſs of manners. His walk was ſlow, and his voice tremulous and mournful. He was eaſily excited to ſmiles, but very ſeldom provoked to laughter

His mind was in an uncommon degree vigorous and active; his judgment was accurate, his apprehenſion quick, and his memory ſo tenacious, that he was frequently obſerved to know what he had learn-

ed from others in a ſhort time better than thoſe by whom he was informed, and could frequently recollect incidents, with all their combination of circumſtances, which few would have regarded at the preſent time, but which the quickneſs of his apprehenſion impreſſed upon him. He had the peculiar felicity that his attention never deſerted him; he was preſent to every object, and regardful of the moſt trifling occurrences: he had the art of eſcaping from his own reflections, and accommodating himſelf to every new ſcene.

To this quality is to be imputed the extent of his knowledge, compared with the ſmall time which he ſpent in viſible endeavours to acquire it. He mingled in curſory converſation with the ſame ſteadineſs of attention as others apply to a lecture, and, amidſt the appearance of thoughtleſs gaiety, loſt no new idea that was ſtarted, nor any hint that could be improved: he had therefore made in coffeehouſes the ſame proficiency as in other ſtudies; and it is remarkable that the writings of a man of little education and little reading have an air of learning ſcarcely to be found in any other performances, but which perhaps as often obſcures as embelliſhes them.

His judgment was eminently exact both with regard to writings and to men. The knowledge of life was indeed his chief attainment, and it is not with-

out ſome ſatisfaction that I can produce the ſuffrage of Savage in favour of human nature, of which he never appeared to entertain ſuch odious ideas as ſome who perhaps had neither his judgment nor experience have publiſhed, either in oſtentation of their ſagacity, vindication of their crimes, or gratification of their malice.

His method of life particularly qualified him for converſation, of which he knew how to practiſe all the graces. He was never vehement or loud, but at once modeſt and eaſy, open and reſpectful; his language was vivacious and elegant, and equally happy upon grave or humorous ſubjects. He was generally cenſured for not knowing when to retire, but that was not the defect of his judgment, but of his fortune; when he left his company he was frequently to ſpend the remaining part of the night in the ſtreet, or at leaſt was abandoned to gloomy reflections, which it is not ſtrange that he delayed as long as he could, and ſometimes forgot that he gave others pain to avoid it himſelf.

It cannot be ſaid that he made uſe of his abilities for the direction of his own conduct: an irregular and diſſipated manner of life had made him the ſlave of every paſſion that happened to be excited by the preſence of its object, and that ſlavery to his paſſions reciprocally produced a life irregular and diſ-

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ſipated. He was not maſter of his own motions, nor could promiſe any thing for the next day.

With regard to his economy, nothing can be added to the relation of his life: he appeared to think himſelf born to be ſupported by others, and diſpenſed from all neceſſity of providing for himſelf; he therefore never proſecuted any ſcheme of advantage, nor endeavoured even to ſecure the profits which his Writings might have afforded him.

His temper was, in conſequence of the dominion of his paſſions, uncertain and capricious; he was eaſily engaged, and eaſily diſguſted; but he is accuſed of retaining his hatred more tenaciouſly than his benevolence.

He was compaſſionate both by nature and principle, and always ready to perform offices of humanity; but when he was provoked, and very ſmall offences were ſufficient to provoke him, he would proſecute his revenge with the utmoſt acrimony till his paſſion had ſubſided.

His friendſhip was, therefore, of little value; for though he was zealous in the ſupport or vindication of thoſe whom he loved, yet it was always dangerous to truſt him, becauſe he conſidered himſelf as diſcharged by the firſt quarrel from all ties of honour or gratitude; and would betray thoſe ſecrets which, in the warmth of confidence, had been imparted to him.

This practice drew upon him an univerſal accuſation of ingratitude; nor can it be denied that he was very ready to ſet himſelf free from the load of an obligation; for he could not bear to conceive himſelf in a ſtate of dependence, his pride being equally powerful with his other paſſions, and appearing in the form of inſolence at one time and of vanity at another. Vanity, the moſt innocent ſpecies of pride, was moſt frequently predominant. He could not eaſily leave off when he had once begun to mention himſelf or his Works, nor ever read his verſes without ſtealing his eyes from the page, to diſcover in the faces of his audience how they were affected with any favourite paſſage.

A kinder name than that of Vanity ought to be given to the delicacy with which he was always careful to ſeparate his own merit from every other man's, and to reject that praiſe to which he had no claim. He did not forget, in mentioning his performances, to mark every line that had been ſuggeſted or amended, and was ſo accurate as to relate that he owed three words in The Wanderer to the advice of his friends.

His veracity was queſtioned, but with little reaſon; his accounts, tho' not indeed always the ſame, were, generally, conſiſtent. When he loved any man he ſuppreſſed all his faults, and when he had been offended by him concealed all his virtues: but his cha-

racters were, generally, true ſo far as he proceeded, though it cannot be denied that his partiality might have ſometimes the effect of falſehood

In caſes indifferent he was zealous for virtue, truth, and juſtice: he knew very well the neceſſity of goodneſs to the preſent and future happineſs of mankind, nor is there perhaps any writer who has leſs endeavoured to pleaſe by flattering the appetites, or perverting the judgment.

As an author, therefore, and he now ceaſes to influence mankind in any other character, if one piece which he had reſolved to ſuppreſs be excepted, he has very little to fear from the ſtricteſt moral or religious cenſure: and though he may not be altogether ſecure againſt the objections of the critic, it muſt, however, be acknowledged that his Works are the productions of a genius truly poetical, and what many writers who have been more laviſhly applauded cannot boaſt, that they have an original air which has no reſemblance of any foregoing writer; that the verſification and ſentiments have a caſt peculiar to themſelves, which no man can imitate with ſucceſs, becauſe what was nature in Savage would in another be affectation. It muſt be confeſſed that his deſcriptions are ſtriking, his images animated, his fictions juſtly imagined, and his allegories artfully purſued; that his diction is elevated, though ſometimes forced,

and his numbers ſonorous and majeſtic, though frequently ſluggiſh and incumbered. Of his ſtyle the general fault is harſhneſs, and its general excellence is dignity; of his ſentiments the prevailing beauty is ſublimity, and uniformity the prevailing defect.

For his life, or for his Writings, none who candidly conſider his fortune will think an apology either neceſſary or difficult. If he was not always ſufficiently inſtructed in his ſubject, his knowledge was at leaſt greater than could have been attained by others in the ſame ſtate: if his Works were ſometimes unfiniſhed, accuracy cannot reaſonably be exacted from a man oppreſſed with want, which he has no hope of relieving but by a ſpeedy publication. The inſolence and reſentment of which he is accuſed were not eaſily to be avoided by a great mind irritated by perpetual hardſhips, and conſtrained hourly to return the ſpurns of Contempt and repreſs the inſolence of Proſperity; and vanity may, ſurely, be readily pardoned in him, to whom life afforded no other comforts than barren praiſes, and the conſciouſneſs of deſerving them.

Thoſe are no proper judges of his conduct who have ſlumbered away their time on the down of affluence; nor will any wiſe man preſume to ſay, "Had "I been in Savage's condition I ſhould have lived or "written better than Savage."

This relation will not be wholly without its uſe, if thoſe who languiſh under any part of his ſufferings ſhall be enabled to fortify their patience, by reflecting that they feel only thoſe afflictions from which the abilities of Savage did not exempt him; or thoſe who, in confidence of ſuperior capacities or attainments, diſregard the common maxims of life, ſhall be reminded that nothing will ſupply the want of prudence; and that negligence and irregularity long continued will make knowledge uſeleſs, wit ridiculous, and genius contemptible.

# TO THOMAS HARRIS, ESQ.

PATENTEE OF THE

## THEATRE ROYAL, COVENT GARDEN.

SIR,

I BEG leave to inſcribe to you the Writings of Mr. Richard Savage, an author whoſe early love of the drama not the bittereſt calamities could depreſs. His genius and misfortunes have heretofore gained him the protection of a predeceſſor of your's in the direction of the theatre—Sir Richard Steele, who, like Mr. Harris, poſſeſſed an uncommon ſhare of benevolence: he acted as you would have done: he promoted his intereſt with the utmoſt zeal, related his misfortunes, extolled his merit, and took all opportunities of recommending him. The unfortunate Savage, in return, would have joined with others in acknowledging your worth and merit in directing the moſt rational entertainment of an enlightened people. It requires no common exertion of ſpirit, activity and abilities, to be competitor for the public favour, with a theatre directed by the greateſt dramatic genius our country could ever boaſt: one aſſiſtance you ſhare with that manager, the advice of a numerous group of Newſpaper Wits and Critics, thoſe infallible judges of every art and ſcience, who, with a candour and kindneſs peculiar to themſelves, ſeize every op-

portunity to mark the moſt minute miſtake of manager and actor. If your feelings and doubts ſhould make you reject the advice of ſuch eminent writers, (who have frequently had the greateſt lawyers for their commentators) I truſt you will continue to receive, what I know you ardently wiſh—the approbation of the public. I am,

SIR,

Your obliged friend,

THE EDITOR.

# EPISTLES.

## AN EPISTLE

TO THE RIGHT HON.

SIR ROBERT WALPOLE.

STILL let low wits, who ſenſe nor honour prize,
Sneer at all gratitude, all truth diſguiſe;
At living worth, becauſe alive, exclaim,
Inſult the exil'd, and the dead defame!
Such paint what pity veils in private woes,
And what we ſee with grief with mirth expoſe;
Studious to urge—(whom will mean authors ſpare?)
The child's, the parent's, and the conſort's, tear;
Unconſcious of what pangs the heart may rend,
To loſe what they have ne'er deſerv'd—a friend.
Such, ignorant of facts, invent, relate,
Expos'd perfiſt, and anſwer'd ſtill debate;
Such but by foils the cleareſt luſtre ſee,
And deem aſperſing others praiſing thee.
Far from theſe tracks my honeſt lays aſpire,
And greet a gen'rous heart with gen'rous fire.
Truth be my guide! Truth! which thy virtue claims;
This nor the poet nor the patron ſhames.
When party-minds ſhall loſe contracted views,
And hiſt'ry queſtion the recording Muſe,

'Tis this alone to after-times muſt ſhine,
And ſtamp the poet and his theme divine.

Long has my Muſe, from many a mournful cauſe,
Sung with ſmall pow'r, nor ſought ſublime applauſe;
From that great point ſhe now ſhall urge her ſcope,
On that fair promiſe reſt her future hope;
Where policy, from ſtate-illuſion clear,
Can thro' an open aſpect ſhine ſincere;
Where Science, Law, and Liberty, depend,
And own the patron, patriot, and the friend;
(That breaſt to feel, that eye on worth to gaze,
That ſmile to cheriſh, and that hand to raiſe!)
Whoſe beſt of hearts her beſt of thoughts inflame,
Whoſe joy is bounty, and whoſe gift is fame.

Where for relief flies Innocence diſtreſs'd?
To you, who chaſe oppreſſion from th' oppreſs'd;
Who, when complaint to you alone belongs,
Forgive your own tho' not a people's wrongs;
Who ſtill make public property your care,
And thence bid private grief no more deſpair.

Aſk they what ſtate your ſhelt'ring care ſhall own?
'Tis youth, 't is age, the cottage, and the throne:
Nor can the priſon 'ſcape your ſearching eye,
Your ear ſtill op'ning to the captive's cry.
Nor leſs was promis'd from thy early ſkill,
Ere pow'r enforc'd benevolence of will:
To friends refin'd, thy private life adher'd,
By thee improving ere by thee preferr'd.

Well hadſt thou weigh'd what truth ſuch friends af-
With thee reſigning, and with thee reſtor'd : [ford,
Thou taught'ſt them all extenſive love to bear,
And now mankind with thee their friendſhips ſhare.

As the rich cloud by due degrees expands,
And ſhow'rs down plenty thick on ſundry lands,
Thy ſpreading worth in various bounty fell,
Made genius flouriſh, and made art excel.

How many, yet deceiv'd, all pow'r oppoſe,
Their fears increaſing as decreaſe their woes;
Jealous of bondage while they freedom gain,
And moſt oblig'd moſt eager to complain?

But well we count our bliſs if well we view,
When pow'r oppreſſion not protection grew;
View preſent ills that puniſh diſtant climes,
Or bleed in mem'ry here from ancient times.

Mark firſt the robe abus'd Religion wore,
Story'd with griefs, and ſtain'd with human gore!
What various tortures, engines, fires, reveal,
Study'd, empow'r'd, and ſanctify'd, by zeal?

Stop here, my Muſe!—peculiar woes deſcry,
Bid them in ſad ſucceſſion ſtrike thy eye.
Lo! to her eye the ſad ſucceſſion ſprings,
She looks, ſhe weeps, and as ſhe weeps ſhe ſings!

See the doom'd Hebrew of his ſtores bereſt!
See holy Murder juſtify the theft!
His ravag'd gold ſome uſeleſs ſhrine ſhall raiſe,
His gems on ſuperſtitious idols blaze!

His wife, his babe, deny'd their little home,
Stripp'd, ſtarv'd, unfriended and unpity'd, roam!
Lo! the prieſt's hand the wafer-god ſupplies!—
A king by conſecrated poiſon dies!
See Learning range yon' broad ethereal plain
From world to world, and godlike Science gain!
Ah! what avails the curious ſearch ſuſtain'd,
The finiſh'd toil, the godlike Science gain'd?
Sentenc'd to flames th' expanſive wiſdom fell,
And truth from Heav'n was ſorcery from Hell.
See Reaſon bid each myſtic wile retire,
Strike out new light, and mark!—the wiſe admire!
Zeal ſhall ſuch hereſy, like Learning, hate,
The ſame their glory, and the ſame their fate.
Lo! from fought mercy one his life receives,
Life worſe than death that cruel Mercy gives:
The man, perchance, who wealth and honours bore,
Slaves in the mine, or ceaſeleſs ſtrains the oar.
So doom'd are theſe, and ſuch perhaps our doom,
Own'd we a prince, avert it Heav'n! from Rome.
Nor private worth alone falſe Zeal aſſails;
Whole nations bleed when bigotry prevails.
What are ſworn friendſhips? what are kindred ties?
What 's faith with hereſy? (the zealot cries.)
See! when war ſinks the thund'ring cannon's roar,
When wounds, and death, and diſcord, are no more;
When muſic bids undreading joys advance,
Swell the ſoft hour, and turn the ſwimming dance;

When to crown theſe the ſocial ſparkling bowl
Lifts the cheer'd ſenſe, and pours out all the ſoul;
Sudden he ſends red Maſſacre abroad,
Faithleſs to man, to prove his faith to God.
What pure perſuaſive eloquence denies,
All-drunk with blood, the arguing ſword ſupplies;
The ſword, which to th' aſſaſſin's hand is giv'n,
Th' aſſaſſin's hand!—pronounc'd the hand of Heav'n!
Sex bleeds with ſex, and infancy with age;
No rank, no place, no virtue, ſtops his rage:
Shall ſword, and flame, and devaſtation, ceaſe
To pleaſe with zeal wild zeal! the God of Peace?

Nor leſs abuſe has ſcourg'd the civil ſtate,
When a king's will became a nation's fate.
Enormous pow'r! nor noble nor ſerene;
Now fierce and cruel; now but wild and mean.
See titles ſold to raiſe th' unjuſt ſupply!
Compell'd the purchaſe! or be fin'd, or buy!
No public ſpirit, guarded well by laws,
Uncenſur'd cenſures in his country's cauſe.
See from the merchant forc'd th' unwilling loan!
Who dares deny, or deem his wealth his own?
Denying, ſee! where dungeon-damps ariſe,
Diſeas'd he pines, and unaſſiſted dies.
Far more than maſſacre that fate accurſt!
As of all deaths the ling'ring is the worſt.

New courts of cenſure griev'd with new offence,
Tax'd without pow'r, and fin'd without pretence,

Explain'd at will each ſtatute's wreſted aim,
Till marks of merit were the marks of ſhame;
So monſtrous!—life was the ſevereſt grief,
And the worſt death ſeem'd welcome for relief.
In vain the ſubject ſought redreſs from law,
No ſenate liv'd the partial judge to awe:
Senates were void, and ſenators confin'd
For the great cauſe of Nature and Mankind.
Who kings ſuperior to the people own,
Yet prove the law ſuperior to the throne.
Who can review, without a gen'rous tear,
A Church, a State, ſo impious, ſo ſevere?
A land uncultur'd thro' polemic jars,
Rich!—but with carnage from inteſtine wars!
The hand of Induſtry employ'd no more,
And Commerce flying to ſome ſafer ſhore;
All property reduc'd, to pow'r a prey,
And Senſe and Learning chas'd by Zeal away?
Who honours not each dear departed ghoſt
That ſtrove for Liberty ſo won, ſo loſt,
So well regain'd when godlike William roſe,
And firſt entail'd the bleſſing George beſtows?
May Walpole ſtill the growing triumph raiſe,
And bid theſe emulate Eliza's days;
Still ſerve a prince who, o'er his people great,
As far tranſcends in virtue as in ſtate!
The Muſe purſues thee to thy rural ſeat;
Ev'n there ſhall Liberty inſpire retreat.

When ſolemn cares in flowing wit are drown'd,
And ſportive chat and ſocial laughs go round;
Ev'n then, when pauſing mirth begins to fail,
The converſe varies to the ſerious tale;
The tale pathetic ſpeaks ſome wretch that owes
To ſome deficient law reliefleſs woes:
What inſtant pity warms thy gen'rous breaſt!
How all the legiſlator ſtands confeſt!
Now ſprings the hint! 't is now improv'd to thought!
Now ripe! and now to public welfare brought!
New bills, which regulating means beſtow,
Juſtice preſerve, yet ſoft'ning mercy know:
Juſtice ſhall low vexatious wiles decline,
And ſtill thrive moſt when lawyers moſt repine;
Juſtice from jargon ſhall refin'd appear,
To knowledge thro' our native language clear:
Hence we may learn, no more deceiv'd by law,
Whence wealth and life their beſt aſſurance draw.

The freed inſolvent, with induſtrious hand,
Strives yet to ſatisfy the juſt demand:
Thus ruthleſs men, who would his pow'rs reſtrain,
Oft' what ſeverity would loſe obtain.

Theſe, and a thouſand gifts, thy thought acquires,
Which Liberty benevolent inſpires.
From Liberty the fruits of law increaſe,
Plenty, and joy, and all the arts of peace.
Abroad the merchant, while the tempeſts rave,
Advent'rous ſails, nor fears the wind and wave;

At home, untir'd, we find th' auſpicious hand
With flocks, and herds, and harveſts, bleſs the land;
While there the peaſant glads the grateful ſoil,
Here mark the ſhipwright, there the maſon toil,
Hew, ſquare, and rear, magnificent, the ſtone,
And give our oaks a glory not their own!
What life demands by this obeys her call,
And added elegance conſummates all.
Thus ſtately cities, ſtatelier navies, riſe,
And ſpread our grandeur under diſtant ſkies.
From Liberty each nobler ſcience ſprung,
A Bacon brighten'd, and a Spenſer ſung;
A Clarke and Locke new tracks of truth explore,
And Newton reaches heights unreach'd before.
What Trade ſees property that wealth maintain
Which Induſtry no longer dreads to gain;
What tender conſcience kneels with fears reſign'd,
Enjoys her worſhip, and avows her mind;
What genius now from want to fortune climbs,
And to ſafe ſcience ev'ry thought ſublimes;
What Royal Pow'r, from his ſuperior ſtate,
Sees public happineſs his own create,
But kens thoſe patriot-ſouls to which he owes
Of old each ſource whence now each bleſſing flows?
And if ſuch ſpirits from their heav'n deſcend,
And, blended, flame to point one glorious end;
Flame from one breaſt, and thence on Britain ſhine,
What love, what praiſe, O Walpole! then is thine?

# TO MR. JOHN DYER, A PAINTER,

*Adviſing him to draw a certain*

## NOBLE AND ILLUSTRIOUS PERSON.

Occaſioned by ſeeing his

PICTURE OF THE CELEBRATED CLIO *.

FORGIVE an artleſs, an officious, friend,
Weak when I judge, but willing to commend;
Fall'n as I am, by no kind fortune rais'd,
Depreſs'd, obſcur'd, unpity'd, and unprais'd;
Yet when theſe well-known features I peruſe,
Some warmth awakes—ſome embers of a Muſe.

Ye Muſes, Graces, and ye Loves! appear;
Your queen, your Venus, and your Clio, is here;
In ſuch pure fires her riſing thoughts refine,
Her eyes with ſuch commanding ſweetneſs ſhine,
Such vivid tinctures ſure thro' ether glow,
Stain ſummer clouds, or gild the wat'ry bow;
If life Pygmalion's iv'ry fav'rite fir'd,
Sure ſome enamour'd god this draught inſpir'd!
Or, if you raſhly caught Promethean flame,
Shade the ſweet theft, and mar the beauteous frame!
Yet if thoſe cheering lights the proſpect fly,
Ah!—let no pleaſing view the loſs ſupply:

* See Dyer's Poems.

Some dreary den, ſome deſert waſte, prepare,
Wild as my thoughts, or dark as my deſpair.
But ſtill, my Friend! ſtill the ſweet object ſtays,
Still ſtream your colours rich with Clio's rays!
Sure at each kindling touch your canvaſs glows!
Sure the full form, inſtinct with ſpirit, grows!
Let the dull artiſt puzzling rules explore,
Dwell on the face, and gaze the features o'er;
You eye the ſoul—there genuine nature find;
You thro' the meaning muſcles ſtrike the mind.
Nor can one view ſuch boundleſs pow'r confine,
All Nature opens to an art like thine!
Now rural ſcenes in ſimple grandeur riſe,
Vales, hills, lawns, lakes, and vineyards, feaſt our eyes!
Now halcyon Peace a ſmiling aſpect wears!
Now the red ſcene with war and ruin glares!
Here Britain's fleets o'er Europe's ſeas preſide!
There long-loſt cities rear their ancient pride!
You from the grave can half redeem the ſlain,
And bid great Julius charm the world again;
Mark out Pharſalia's, mark out Munda's, fray,
And image all the honours of the day.
But if new glories moſt our warmth excite,
If toils untry'd to nobleſt aims invite,
Would you in envy'd pomp unrivall'd reign,
Oh! let Horatius grace the canvaſs plain;
His form might ev'n idolatry create,
In lineage, titles, wealth, and worth, elate:

Empires to him might virgin honours owe,
From him arts, arms, and laws, new influence know:
For him kind ſuns on fruits and grains ſhall ſhine,
And future gold lie rip'ning in the mine:
For him fine marble in the quarry lies,
Which in due ſtatues to his fame ſhall riſe.
Thro' thoſe bright features Cæſar's ſpirit trace,
Each conqu'ring ſweetneſs, each imperial grace;
All that is ſoft, or eminently great,
In love, in war, in knowledge, or in ſtate.

Thus ſhall your colours like his worth amaze;
Thus ſhall you charm, enrich'd with Clio's praiſe:
Clear, and more clear, your golden genius ſhines,
While my dim lamp of life obſcure declines:
Dull'd in damp ſhades it waſtes, unſeen, away,
While your's, triumphant, grows one blaze of day.

## AN EPISTLE TO MR. JOHN DYER,

### AUTHOR OF GRONGAR HILL,

*In anſwer to his from the country* *.

Now various birds in melting concert ſing,
And hail the beauty of the op'ning ſpring;
Now to thy dreams the nightingale complains,
Till the lark wakes thee with her cheerful ſtrains;
Wakes, in thy verſe and friendſhip, ever kind!
Melodious comfort to my jarring mind.

* See Dyer's Poems.

Oh! could my ſoul thro' depths of knowledge ſee,
Could I read Nature and mankind like thee,
I ſhould o'ercome or bear the ſhocks of Fate,
And ev'n draw envy to the humbleſt ſtate.
Thou canſt raiſe honour from each ill event,
From ſhocks gain vigour, and from want content.
Think not light poetry my life's chief care;
The Muſe's manſion is at beſt but air;
But if more ſolid works my meaning forms,
Th' unfiniſh'd ſtructures fall by Fortune's ſtorms!
Oft' have I ſaid we falſely thoſe accuſe
Whoſe godlike ſouls life's middle ſtate refuſe.
Self-love, I cry'd, there ſeeks ignoble reſt;
Care ſleeps not calm when millions wake unbleſt;
Mean let me ſhrink, or ſpread ſweet ſhade o'er all,
Low as the ſhrub, or as the cedar tall!—
'Twas vain! 'twas wild!—I ſought the middle ſtate,
And found the good, and found the truly great.
Tho' verſe can never give my ſoul her aim,
Tho' action only claims ſubſtantial fame;
Tho' Fate denies what my proud wants require,
Yet grant me, Heav'n! by knowledge to aſpire.
Thus to inquiry let me prompt the mind,
Thus clear dimm'd Truth, and bid her bleſs mankind;
From the pierc'd orphan thus draw ſhafts of grief,
Arm Want with patience, and teach Wealth relief!
To ſerve lov'd Liberty inſpire my breath!
Or, if my life be uſeleſs, grant me death;

For he who uſeleſs is in life ſurvey'd,
Burthens that world his duty bids him aid.
Say, what have honours to allure the mind,
Which he gains moſt who leaſt has ſerv'd mankind?
Titles, when worn by fools, I dare deſpiſe;
Yet they claim homage when they crown the wiſe.
When high diſtinction marks deſerving heirs,
Deſert ſtill dignifies the mark it wears.
But who to birth alone would honours owe?
Honours, if true, from ſeeds of merit grow:
Thoſe trees with ſweeteſt charms invite our eyes
Which from our own ingraftment fruitful riſe.
Still we love beſt what we with labour gain,
As the child 's dearer for the mother's pain.
The great I would not envy nor deride,
Nor ſtoop to ſwell a vain ſuperior's pride,
Nor view an equal's hope with jealous eyes,
Nor cruſh the wretch beneath who wailing lies.
My ſympathizing breaſt his grief can feel,
And my eye weep the wound I cannot heal.
Ne'er among friendſhips let me ſow debate,
Nor by another's fall advance my ſtate;
Nor miſuſe wit againſt an abſent friend:
Let me the virtues of a foe defend!
In wealth and want true minds preſerve their weight;
Meek tho' exalted, tho' diſgrac'd elate;
Gen'rous and grateful, wrong'd or help'd they live;
Grateful to ſerve, and gen'rous to forgive.

This may they learn who close thy life attend,
Which, dear in mem'ry, still instructs thy friend.
Tho' cruel distance bars my grosser eye,
My soul, clear sighted, draws thy virtue nigh;
Thro' her deep woe that quick'ning comfort gleams,
And lights up fortitude with friendship's beams.

## VERSES TO AARON HILL, ESQ.

WITH THE TRAGEDY OF SIR THOMAS OVERBURY,

*Expecting him to correct it.*

I.

As the soul, stripp'd of mortal clay,
Grows all divinely fair,
And boundless roves the Milky Way,
And views sweet prospects there;

II.

This hero, clogg'd with drossy lines,
By thee new vigour tries;
As thy correcting hand refines,
Bright scenes around him rise.

III.

Thy touch brings the wish'd stone to pass
So sought, so long foretold;
It turns polluted lead or brass
At once to purest gold.

# THE FRIEND.

## AN EPISTLE TO AARON HILL, ESQ.

O my lov'd Hill! O thou by Heav'n deſign'd
To charm, to mend, and to adorn, mankind!
To thee my hopes, fears, joys, and ſorrows, tend,
Thou brother, father, nearer yet!—thou Friend!
If worldly friendſhips of cement divide
As int'reſts vary, or as whims preſide;
If leagues of Lux'ry borrow Friendſhip's light,
Or leagues ſubverſive of all ſocial right;
O ſay, my Hill! in what propitious ſphere
Gain we the Friend, pure, knowing, and ſincere?
'Tis where the worthy and the wiſe retire;
There Wealth may learn its uſe, may Love inſpire;
There may young Worth the nobleſt end obtain,
In want may friends, in friends may knowledge gain,
In knowledge bliſs; for wiſdom virtue finds,
And brightens mortal to immortal minds.
Kind then my wrongs if love like your's ſucceed,
For you, like Virtue, are a friend indeed!
Oft' when you ſaw my youth wild error know,
Reproof, ſoft hinted, taught the bluſh to glow.
Young and unform'd, you firſt my genius rais'd,
Juſt ſmil'd when faulty, and when mod'rate prais'd.
Me ſhunn'd, me ruin'd, ſuch a Mother's rage!
You ſung, till Pity wept o'er ev'ry page.

You call'd my lays and wrongs to early fame;
Yet, yet th' obdurate mother felt no ſhame.
Pierc'd as I was, your counſel ſoften'd care,
To eaſe turn'd anguiſh, and to hope deſpair.
The man who never wound afflictive feels,
He never felt the balmy worth that heals.
Welcome the wound when bleſs'd with ſuch relief!
For deep is felt the Friend when felt in grief.

From you ſhall never, but with life, remove
Aſpiring genius, condeſcending love:
When ſome with cold ſuperior looks redreſs,
Relief ſeems inſult, and confirms diſtreſs;
You! when you view the man with wrongs beſieg'd,
While warm you act th' obliger ſeem the oblig'd.

All-winning, mild to each of lowly ſtate;
To equals free, unſervile to the great;
Greatneſs you honour, when by worth acquir'd;
Worth is by worth in ev'ry rank admir'd.
Greatneſs you ſcorn when titles inſult ſpeak;
Proud to vain Pride, to honour'd Meekneſs meek.
That worthleſs bliſs which others court you fly;
That worthy woe they ſhun attracts your eye.

But ſhall the Muſe reſound alone your praiſe?
No—let the public Friend exalt her lays!
O trace that Friend with me!—he 's your's!—he 's [mine!—
The world's—beneficent behold him ſhine!

Is wealth his ſphere? If riches, like a tide,
From either India pour their golden pride;

Rich in good works, him others' wants employ;
He gives the widow's heart to ſing for joy.
To orphans, priſ'ners, ſhall his bounty flow,
The weeping family of Want and Woe.
Is knowledge his? Benevolently great,
In leiſure active, and in care ſedate;
What aid his little wealth perchance denies,
In each hard inſtance his advice ſupplies.
With modeſt truth he ſets the wand'ring right,
And gives religion pure primeval light;
In love diffuſive, as in light refin'd,
The lib'ral emblem of his Maker's mind.
Is pow'r his orb? He then, like pow'r divine,
On all, tho' with a varied ray, will ſhine.
Ere pow'r was his, the man he once careſt
Meets the ſame faithful ſmile and mutual breaſt:
But aſks his friend ſome dignity of ſtate;
His friend, unequal to th' incumbent weight?
Aſks it a ſtranger, one whom parts inſpire
With all a people's welfare would require?
His choice admits no pauſe; his gift will prove
All private weal abſorb'd in public love.
He ſhields his country when for aid ſhe calls;
Or, ſhould ſhe fall, with her he greatly falls:
But as proud Rome, with guilty conqueſt crown'd,
Spread ſlav'ry, death, and deſolation, round,
Should e'er his country for dominion's prize
Againſt the ſons of men a faction riſe,

Glory in her's is in his eye diſgrace;
The Friend of truth, the Friend of human race.
Thus to no one, no ſect, no clime, confin'd,
His boundleſs love embraces all mankind;
And all their virtues in his life are known,
And all their joys and ſorrows are his own!
Theſe are the lights where ſtands that Friend confeſt;
This, this the ſpirit which informs thy breaſt.
Thro' Fortune's cloud thy genuine worth can ſhine;
What wouldſt thou not were wealth and greatneſs thine?

## TO THE EXCELLENT MIRANDA,

CONSORT OF AARON HILL, ESQ.

*On reading her Poems.*

Each ſoft'ning charm of Clio's ſmiling ſong,
Montague's ſoul, which ſhines divinely ſtrong,
Theſe blend, with graceful eaſe, to form thy rhyme,
Tender yet chaſte, ſweet-ſounding yet ſublime.
Wiſdom and wit have made thy works their care,
Each paſſion glows refin'd by precept there:
To fair Miranda's form each Grace is kind;
The Muſes and the Virtues tune thy mind.

# TO MRS. ELIZA HAYWOOD,

ON HER NOVEL CALLED

## THE RASH RESOLVE.

Doom'd to a fate which damps the poet's flame,
A Muſe unfriended greets thy riſing name;
Unvers'd in envy's or in flatt'ry's phraſe,
Greatneſs ſhe flies, yet merit claims her praiſe;
Nor will ſhe at her withering wreath repine,
But ſmile, if Fame and Fortune cheriſh thine.

The Sciences in thy ſweet genius charm,
And with their ſtrength thy ſex's ſoftneſs arm.
In thy full figures painting's force we find;
As muſic fires, thy language lifts, the mind:
Thy pow'r gives form, and touches into life
The paſſions imag'd in their bleeding ſtrife:
Contraſted ſtrokes true art and fancy ſhow,
And lights and ſhades in lively mixture flow.
Hope attacks Fear, and Reaſon, Love's control,
Jealouſy wounds, and Friendſhip heals the ſoul:
Black Falſehood wears bright Gallantry's diſguiſe,
And the gilt cloud enchants the fair one's eyes.
Thy dames in grief and frailties lovely ſhine,
And when moſt mortal half appear divine.
If, when ſome godlike fav'rite paſſion ſways,
The willing heart too fatally obeys,

Great minds lament what cruel cenſure blames,
And ruin'd virtue gen'rous pity claims.
Eliza ſtill impaint Love's pow'rful queen!
Let love, ſoft love, exalt each ſwelling ſcene.
Arm'd with keen wit, in Fame's wide liſts advance;
Spain yields in fiction, in politeneſs France.
Such orient light as the firſt poets knew
Flames from thy thought, and brightens ev'ry view!
A ſtrong, a glorious, a luxuriant fire,
Which warms cold wiſdom into wild deſire!
Thy fable glows ſo rich thro' ev'ry page,
What moral's force can the fierce heat aſſwage?
And yet—but ſay if ever doom'd to prove
The ſad, the dear, perplexities of love!
Where ſeeming tranſport ſoftens ev'ry pain,
Where fancy'd freedom waits the winning chain;
Varying from pangs to viſionary joys,
Sweet is the fate, and charms as it deſtroys!
Say then—if love to ſudden rage gives way,
Will the ſoft paſſion not reſume its ſway?
Charming and charm'd, can Love from Love retire?
Can a cold convent quench th' unwilling fire?
Precept, if human, may our thoughts refine;
More we admire, but cannot prove divine.

# AN EPISTLE TO MRS. OLDFIELD,

## OF THE THEATRE-ROYAL.

WHILE to your charms unequal verſe I raiſe,
Aw'd I admire and tremble as I praiſe;
Here Art and Genius new refinement need,
Liſt'ning they gaze, and as they gaze recede!
Can Art or Genius, or their pow'rs combin'd,
But from corporeal organs ſketch the mind?
When found embody'd can with ſhape ſurpriſe,
The Muſe may emulate your voice and eyes.
Mark, rival arts perfection's point purſue!
Each rivals each but to excel in you!
The buſt and medal bear the meaning face,
And the proud ſtatue adds the poſture 's grace;
Imag'd at length, the bury'd Heroine, known,
Still ſeems to wound, to ſmile or frown in ſtone!
As art would art, or metal ſtone ſurpaſs,
Her ſoul ſtrikes, gleaming, thro' Corinthian braſs!
Serene the ſaint in ſmiling ſilver ſhines,
And cherubs weep in gold o'er ſainted ſhrines!
If long-loſt forms from Raphael's pencil glow,
Wondrous in warmth the mimic colours flow;
Each look, each attitude, new grace diſplays;
Your voice and motion life and muſic raiſe.
Thus Cleopatra in your charms refines;
She lives, ſhe ſpeaks, with force improv'd ſhe ſhines!

Fair, and more fair, you ev'ry grace tranſmit;
Love, learning, beauty, elegance, and wit.
Cæſar, the world's unrivall'd maſter, ſir'd,
In her imperial ſoul his own admir'd!
Philippi's victor wore her winning chain,
And felt not empire's loſs in Beauty's gain.
Could the pale heroes your bright influence know
Or catch the ſilver accents as they flow,
Drawn from dark reſt by your enchanting ſtrain,
Each ſhade were lur'd to life and love again.

Say, ſweet Inſpirer! were each annal known,
What living greatneſs ſhines there not your own!
If the griev'd Muſe by ſome lov'd empreſs roſe,
New ſtrength, new grace, it to your influence owes;
If Pow'r by war diſtinguiſh'd height reveals,
Your nobler pride the wounds of Fortune heals.
Then could an empire's cauſe demand your care,
The ſoul that juſtly thinks would greatly dare.

Long has feign'd Venus mock'd the Muſe's praiſe;
You dart, divine Ophelia! genuine rays.
Warm thro' thoſe eyes enliv'ning raptures roll,
Sweet thro' each ſtriking feature ſtreams your ſoul!
The ſoul's bright meanings heighten beauty's fires;
Your looks, your thoughts, your deeds, each grace inſpires!

Know, then, if rank'd with monarchs here you ſtand,
What Fate declines you from the Muſe demand;
Each grace that ſhone of old in each fam'd fair,
Or may in modern dames refinement wear;

Whate'er juſt, emulative, thoughts purſue,
Is all confirm'd, is all ador'd, in you!
If godlike boſoms pant for pow'r to bleſs,
If 't is a monarch's glory to redreſs;
In conſcious majeſty you ſhine ſerene,
In thought a heroine, and in act a queen.

TO THE RIGHT HON.

## BESSY COUNTESS OF ROCHFORD,

DAUGHTER OF THE LATE EARL RIVERS,

*When with child.*

As when the ſun walks forth in flaming gold,
Mean plants may ſmile, and humble flow'rs unfold,
The low-laid lark the diſtant ether wings,
And as ſhe ſoars her daring anthem ſings;
So when thy charms celeſtial views create,
My ſmiling ſong ſurmounts my gloomy fate;
Thy angel-embryo prompts my tow'ring lays,
Claims my fond wiſh, and fires my future praiſe:
May it, if male, its grandſire's image wear,
Or in its mother's charms confeſs the fair!
At the kind birth may each mild planet wait;
Soft be the pain, but prove the bleſſing great!
Hail, Rivers! hallow'd Shade! deſcend from reſt!
Deſcend, and ſmile to ſee thy Rochford bleſt:

Weep not the ſcenes thro' which my life muſt run,
Tho' Fate, fleet-footed, ſcents thy languid ſon.
The bar that, dark'ning, croſs'd my creſted claim,
Yields at her charms, and brightens in their flame:
That blood which, honour'd, in thy Rochford reigns,
In cold unwilling wand'rings trac'd my veins:
Want's wint'ry realm froze hard around my view,
And Scorn's keen blaſts a cutting anguiſh blew.
To ſuch ſad weight my gath'ring griefs were wrought,
Life ſeem'd not life but when convuls'd with thought!
Decreed beneath a mother's frown to pine,
Madneſs were eaſe to mis'ry form'd like mine!

Yet my Muſe waits thee thro' the realms of day,
Where lambent lightnings round thy temples play.
Sure my fierce woes will, like thoſe fires, refine,
Thus loſe their torture, and thus glorious ſhine!
And now the Muſe heav'n's milky path ſurveys,
With thee 'twixt pendent worlds it wond'ring ſtrays,
Worlds which, unnumber'd as thy virtues, roll
Round ſuns—fix'd, radiant emblems of thy ſoul!
Hence lights refracted run thro' diſtant ſkies,
Changeful on azure plains in quiv'ring dyes!
So thy mind darted thro' its earthy frame
A wide, a various, and a glitt'ring, flame.

Now a new ſcene enormous luſtre brings,
Now ſeraphs ſhade thee round with ſilver wings;
In angel forms thou ſeeſt thy Rochford ſhine;
In each ſweet form is trac'd her beauteous line!

Such was her ſoul, ere this ſelected mould
Sprung at thy wiſh, the ſparkling life t' infold!
So amidſt cherubs ſhone her ſon refin'd,
Ere infant fleſh the new-form'd ſoul enſhrin'd!
So ſhall a ſequent race from Rochford riſe,
The world's fair pride—deſcendents of the Skies.

## VERSES TO A YOUNG LADY.

POLLY! from me, tho' now a love-ſick youth,
Nay, tho' a poet, hear the voice of Truth.
Polly! you 're not a beauty, yet you 're pretty;
So grave yet gay, ſo ſilly yet ſo witty;
A heart of ſoftneſs, yet a tongue of ſatire;
You 'ave cruelty, yet ev'n with that good-nature:
Now you are free, and now reſerv'd a while;
Now a forc'd frown betrays a willing ſmile.
Reproach'd for abſence, yet your ſight deny'd;
My tongue you ſilence, yet my ſilence chide.
How would you praiſe me ſhould your ſex defame!
Yet, ſhould they praiſe, grow jealous, and exclaim.
If I deſpair, with ſome kind look you bleſs;
But if I hope, at once all hope ſuppreſs.
You ſcorn, yet ſhould my paſſion change or fail,
Too late you 'd whimper out a ſofter tale.
You love, yet from your lover's wiſh retire;
Doubt yet diſcern, deny and yet deſire.
Such, Polly! are your ſex—part truth part fiction;
Some thought, much whim, and all a contradiction.

## EPISTLE TO DAMON AND DELIA.

HEAR, Damon! Delia! hear, in candid lays,
Truth without anger, without flatt'ry praiſe.
A bookiſh mind, with pedantry unfraught,
Oft' a ſedate yet never gloomy thought;
Prompt to rejoice when others pleaſure know,
And prompt to feel the pang for others' woe;
To ſoften faults to which a foe is prone,
And in a friend's perfection praiſe your own;
A will ſincere, unknown to ſelfiſh views,
A heart of love, of gallantry a Muſe;
A delicate yet not a jealous mind;
A paſſion ever fond yet never blind,
Glowing with am'rous yet with guiltleſs fires,
In ever-eager never groſs deſires;
A modeſt honour, ſacred to contain
From tattling vanity when ſmiles you gain;
Conſtant, moſt pleas'd when beauty moſt you pleaſe;
Damon! your picture 's ſhown in tints like theſe.
Say, Delia! muſt I chide you or commend?
Say, muſt I be your flatt'rer or your friend?
To praiſe no graces in a rival fair,
Nor your own foibles in a ſiſter ſpare;
Each lover's billet bant'ring to reveal,
And never known one ſecret to conceal;
Young, fickle, fair, a levity inborn,
To treat all ſighing ſlaves with flippant ſcorn;

An eye expreſſive of a wand'ring mind,
Nor this to read nor that to think inclin'd;
Or when a book or thought from whim retards,
Intent on ſongs or novels, dreſs or cards;
Choice to ſelect the party of delight,
To kill time, thought, and fame, in frolic flight;
To flutter here, to flurry there, on wing;
To talk, to teaze, to ſimper, or to ſing;
To prude it, to coquette it—him to truſt
Whoſe vain looſe life ſhould caution or diſguſt;
Him to diſlike whoſe modeſt worth ſhould pleaſe;—
Say, is your picture ſhown in tints like theſe?
Your's!—you deny it—Hear the point then try'd,
Let Judgment, Truth, the Muſe, and Love, decide.
What! your's!—Nay, faireſt Trifler! frown not ſo:
Is it? the Muſe with doubt—Love anſwers No:
You ſmile—Is 't not? Again the queſtion try—
Yes Judgment thinks, and Truth will Yes reply.

## TO MISS M—— H——,

SENT WITH MR. POPE'S WORKS.

See female vice and female folly here
Rally'd with wit polite or laſh'd ſevere:
Let Pope preſent ſuch objects to our view;
Such are, my Fair! the full reverſe of you.
Rapt when, to Loddon ſtream* from Windſor's ſhades
He ſings the modeſt charms of ſylvan maids,

* Alluding to the epiſode of Loddona in Windſor Foreſt.

Dear Burford's hills in Mem'ry's eye appear,
And Luddal's ſpring * ſtill murmurs in my ear:
But when you ceaſe to bleſs my longing eyes,
Dumb is the ſpring, the joyleſs proſpect dies:
Come then, my Charmer! come; here tranſport reigns;
New health, new youth, inſpirits all my veins.
Each hour let intercourſe of hearts employ,
Thou life of lovelineſs! thou ſoul of joy!
Love wakes the birds—oh! hear each melting lay;
Love warms the world—come, Charmer! come away.
But hark!—immortal Pope reſumes the lyre!
Diviner airs diviner flights inſpire:
Hark where an angel's language tunes the line!
See where the thoughts and looks of angels ſhine!
Here he pour'd all the muſic of your tongue,
And all your looks and thoughts unconſcious ſung.

## SENT TO MRS. BRIDGET JONES,

### WITH THE WANDERER, A POEM.

*Alluding to an Epiſode where a young man turns hermit for the loſs of his wife Olympia.*

When with delight fond Love on Beauty dwelt,
While this the youth and that the fair expreſt,
Faint was his joy compar'd to what I felt,
When in my angel Biddy's preſence bleſt.

* A ſpring near Burford.

Tell her, my Muſe! in ſoft, ſad, ſighing, breath,
If ſhe his piercing grief can pitying ſee,
Worſe than to him was his Olympia's death
From her each moment's abſence is to me.

## TO JOHN POWELL, ESQ.

### BARRISTER AT LAW.

In me long abſent, long with anguiſh fraught,
In me, tho' ſilence long has deaden'd thought,
Yet mem'ry lives, and calls the Muſe's aid,
To ſnatch our friendſhip from oblivion's ſhade.
As ſoon the ſun ſhall ceaſe the world to warm,
As ſoon Llannelly's Fair * that world to charm,
As grateful ſenſe of goodneſs, true like thine,
Shall e'er deſert a breaſt ſo warm as mine.

When imag'd Cambria ſtrikes my mem'ry's eye,
(Cambria! my darling ſcene!) I, ſighing, cry
Where is my Powell? dear Aſſociate!—where?
To him I would unboſom ev'ry care;
To him who early felt from beauty pain,
Gall'd in a plighted faithleſs virgin's chain.
At length, from her ungen'rous fetters freed,
Again he loves! he wooes! his hopes ſucceed!
But the gay bridegroom, ſtill by Fortune croſt,
Is, inſtant, in the weeping widower loſt.

* Mrs. Bridget Jones.

Her, his ſole joy! her from his boſom torn,
What feeling heart but learns, like his, to mourn?
Can Nature, then, ſuch ſudden ſhocks ſuſtain?
Nature thus ſtruck, all reaſon pleads in vain!
Tho' late, from reaſon yet he draws relief,
Dwells on her mem'ry, but diſpels his grief.
Love, wealth, and fame, (tyrannic paſſions all!)
No more inflame him, and no more enthral.
He ſeeks no more in Rufus' Hall renown,
Nor envies Pelf the jargon of the gown;
But, pleas'd with competence, on rural plains
His wiſdom courts that eaſe his worth obtains.
Would private jars, which ſudden riſe, increaſe?
His candour ſmiles all diſcord into peace.
To party ſtorms is public weal reſign'd?
Each ſteady patriot virtue ſteers his mind.
Calm on the beach, while madd'ning billows rave,
He gains philoſophy from ev'ry wave;
Science from ev'ry object round he draws,
From various nature, and from Nature's laws.
He lives o'er ev'ry paſt hiſtoric age;
He calls forth ethics from the fabled page.
Him evangelic truth to thought excites,
And him by turns each claſſic Muſe delights.
With wit well-natur'd, wit, that would diſdain
A pleaſure riſing from another's pain;
Social to all, and moſt of bliſs poſſeſt;
When moſt he renders all around him bleſt;

To unread 'ſquires illiterately gay,
Among the learn'd as learned full as they;
With the polite all, all-accompliſh'd eaſe,
By Nature form'd without deceit to pleaſe.
Thus ſhines thy youth; and thus my friend, elate
In bleſs as well as worth, is truly great.
Me ſtill ſhould ruthleſs Fate, unjuſt, expoſe
Beneath thoſe clouds that rain unnumber'd woes;
Me to ſome nobler ſphere ſhould Fortune raiſe,
To wealth conſpicuous and to laurell'd praiſe;
Unalter'd yet be love and friendſhip mine;
I ſtill am Chloe's, and I ſtill am thine.

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